

SECOND EDITION.

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A

THIRD LETTER

TO

A MEMBER

OF

THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT.

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THIRD LETTER

A NUMBER

THE NEW YORK PUBLICATION



11

A  
THIRD LETTER  
TO  
A MEMBER  
OF  
THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT,  
ON THE PROPOSALS FOR  
P E A C E  
WITH THE  
REGICIDE DIRECTORY  
OF  
FRANCE.

BY THE LATE RIGHT HON. EDMUND BURKE.

London:  
PRINTED FOR F. AND C. RIVINGTON,  
NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD;  
SOLD ALSO BY J. HATCHARD, NO. 173, PICCADILLY.

1797.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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**I**N the conclusion of Mr. BURKE's second Letter on the Proposals of Peace, he threw out some intimation of the plan, which he meant to adopt in the sequel. A third Letter was mentioned by him, as having been then, in part, written. "He intended to proceed next on the question of the facilities possessed by the French Republic, *from the internal State of other Nations, and particularly of this*, for obtaining her ends; and, as his notions were controverted, to take notice of what, in that way, had been recommended to him."

But the abrupt and unprecedented conclusion of Lord Malmesbury's first negotiation, induced him to make some change in the arrangement of his matter. He took up the question of his Lordship's mission, as stated in  
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the papers laid before Parliament, his Majesty's Declaration, and in the publick comments upon it; he thought it necessary to examine the new basis of compensation proposed for this treaty; and having heard it currently whispered about, that the foundation of all his opinions failed in this essential point, that he had not shewn, what means we proposed to carry them into effect, he also determined to bring forward the consideration of the absolute necessity of peace, which he had postponed at the end of his first letter. This was the origin of the letter now offered to the Publick.

The greater part of this pamphlet was actually revised in print by the Author himself, but not in the exact order of the pages. He enlarged his first draft, and separated one great member of his subject for the purpose of introducing some other matter between. Two separate parcels of manuscript, designed to intervene, were found among his papers. One of them he seemed to have gone over himself, and to have improved and augmented.

mented. The other was much more imperfect, just as it was taken from his mouth by dictation. Of course it was necessary to use a more ample discretion in preparing that part for the press.

There is, however, still a very considerable member, or rather there are large fragments and pieces of a considerable member, to which the candour and indulgence of the Publick must be respectfully intreated. Mr. Burke had himself chalked out an accurate outline. There were loose papers found, containing a summary and conclusion of the whole. He had preserved some scattered hints, documents, and parts of a correspondence on the state of the country. He had been long anxiously waiting for some authentick and official information, which he wanted to ascertain, what with his usual sagacity he had fully anticipated from his own observation. When the first two Reports of the Finance Committee of the House of Commons, and the Great Reports of the Secret Committees of both Houses, were printed, he procured and



read them with much avidity ; but the Supreme Disposer of all, in his inscrutable counsels, did not permit the complete execution of the task, which he meditated.

Under these circumstances, his friends originally inclined to lop off altogether, that member which he had left so lame and mutilated ; but the consideration, how much the ultimate credit of all his opinions might possibly depend on that main branch of his question not being wholly suppressed, it was thought best, that some use should be made of the important materials, which he had so far in readiness. It was then conceived that, it might in some degree answer the purpose, to draw out mere tables of figures, with short observations under each of them ; and they were actually printed in that form. These would still however have remained an unseemly chasm, very incoherently and awkwardly filled. At length, therefore, it was resolved, after much hesitation, and under a very unpleasant responsibility, to make a humble attempt at supplying the void with some continued explanation

planation and illustration of the documents, agreeably to Mr. Burke's own Sketch. In performing with pious diffidence that duty of friendship, no one sentiment has been attributed to Mr. Burke, which is not most explicitly known, from repeated conversations and from correspondence, to have been entertained by that illustrious man. Some passages from his own private letters, and some from letters to him, which he was pleased to commend and to preserve, have been interwoven.

From what has been thus fairly submitted, it will be seen, that it is impossible to indicate every period or sentence in the latter part of this letter, which is, and which is not, from the hand of Mr. Burke. It would swell this advertisement to a long preface. In general, the style will too surely declare the author. Not only his friends, but his bitterest enemies (if he now has any enemies) will agree, that he is not to be imitated: he is, as Cowley says, "a vast species alone."

The

The fourth Letter, which was originally designed for the third, has been found complete, as it was first written. The friends of the Author trust, that they shall be able to present it to the Publick nearly as it came from his pen, with little more than some trifling alterations of temporary allusions to things now past, and in this eventful crisis, already obsolete.



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*THE Friends of Mr. Burke having received several valuable Letters, think it a duty incumbent upon them to return thanks for these obliging communications. They will esteem it a Favour, if any Gentleman in possession of any Letters of Mr. Burke, will transmit them to Messrs. F. and C. Rivington.*

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**ERRATUM.**

**Page 45, line 22, for Rhine, read Rhone.**

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## LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

**I** THANK you for the bundle of State-papers, which I received yesterday. I have travelled through the Negotiation; and a sad, founderaus road it is. There is a sort of a standing jest against my countrymen, that one of them on his journey having found a piece of pleasant road, he proposed to his companion to go over it again. This proposal, with regard to the worthy traveller's final destination, was certainly a blunder. It was no blunder as to his immediate satisfaction; for the way was pleasant. In the irksome journey of the Regicide negotiations, it is otherwise: Our "paths are not paths of pleasantness, nor our ways the ways to peace." All our mistakes (if such they are) like those of our Hibernian traveller, are mistakes of repetition; and they will be full as far from bringing us to our place of rest, as his well considered project was from forwarding him to his inn. Yet I see we persevere. Fatigued with our former course; too listless to explore a new one; kept in action by inertness; moving only because we have been in motion; with a sort of plodding

B

perseverance,



perseverance, we resolve to measure back again the very same joyless, hopeless, and inglorious track. Backward and forward; oscillation not progression; much going in a scanty space; the travels of a postillion, miles enough to circle the globe in one short stage; we have been, and we are yet to be jolted and rattled over the loose, misplaced stones, and the treacherous hollows of this rough, ill kept, broken up, treacherous French causeway!

The Declaration, which brings up the rear of the papers laid before Parliament, contains a review and a reasoned summary of all our attempts, and all our failures; a concise but correct narrative of the painful steps taken to bring on the essay of a treaty at Paris; a clear exposure of all the rebuffs we received in the progress of that experiment; an honest confession of our departure from all the rules and all the principles of political negotiation, and of common prudence, in the conduct of it; and to crown the whole, a fair account of the atrocious manner in which the Regicide enemies had broken up what had been so inauspiciously begun and so feebly carried on, by finally, and with all scorn, driving our suppliant Ambassador out of the limits of their usurpation.

Even

Even after all that I have lately seen, I was a little surprized at this exposure. A minute display of hopes formed without foundation, and of labours pursued without fruit, is a thing not very flattering to self-estimation. But truth has its rights and it will assert them. The Declaration, after doing all this with a mortifying candour, concludes the whole recapitulation with an engagement still more extraordinary than all the unusual matter it contains. It says, "That his Majesty, who had entered into this negotiation with *good faith*, who has suffered *no* impediment to prevent his prosecuting it with *earnestness and sincerity*, has now *only to lament* its abrupt termination, and to *renew in the face of all Europe the solemn declaration*, that whenever his enemies shall be *disposed* to enter upon the work of a general pacification in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object."

If the disgusting detail of the accumulated insults we have received, in what we have very properly called our "solicitation," to a gang of felons and murderers, had been produced as a proof of the utter inefficacy of that mode of proceeding with that description of persons, I should have nothing at all to object to it. It might furnish mat-

ter conclusive in argument, and instructive in policy: but with all due submission to high authority, and with all decent deference to superiour lights, it does not seem quite clear to a discernment no better than mine, that the premises in that piece conduct irresistibly to the conclusion. A laboured display of the ill consequences which have attended an uniform course of submission to every mode of contumelious insult, with which the despotism of a proud, capricious, insulting and implacable foe has chosen to buffet our patience, does not appear, to my poor thoughts, to be properly brought forth as a preliminary to justify a resolution of persevering in the very same kind of conduct, towards the very same sort of person, and on the very same principles. We state our experience, and then we come to the manly resolution of acting in contradiction to it. All that has passed at Paris, to the moment of our being shamefully hissed off that stage, has been nothing but a more solemn representation, on the theatre of the nation, of what had been before in rehearsal at Basle. As it is not only confessed by us, but made a matter of charge on the enemy, that he had given us no encouragement to believe there was a change in his disposition, or in his policy at any time subsequent to the period of his rejecting our first overtures, there seems to have been no assignable motive for sending Lord Malmesbury



Malmesbury to Paris, except to expose his humbled country to the worst indignities and the first of the kind, as the Declaration very truly observes, that have been known in the world of negotiation.

An honest neighbour of mine is not altogether unhappy in the application of an old common story to a present occasion. It may be said of my friend, what Horacè says of a neighbour of his, "*garrit aniles ex re fabellas.*" Conversing on this strange subject, he told me a current story of a simple English country 'Squire, who was persuaded by certain *dilettanti* of his acquaintance to see the world, and to become knowing in men and manners. Among other celebrated places, it was recommended to him to visit Constantinople. He took their advice. After various adventures, not to our purpose to dwell upon, he happily arrived at that famous city. As soon as he had a little reposed himself from his fatigue, he took a walk into the streets; but he had not gone far, before a "malignant and "a turban'd Turk" had his choler roused by the careless and assured air, with which this infidel strutted about in the metropolis of true believers. In this temper, he lost no time in doing to our traveller the honours of the place. The Turk crossed over the way, and with perfect good-will gave him two or three lusty kicks on the seat of honour.

honour. To resent, or to return the compliment in Turkey, was quite out of the question. Our traveller, since he could not otherwise acknowledge this kind of favour, received it with the best grace in the world—he made one of his most ceremonious bows, and begged the kicking Mussulman, “to accept his perfect assurances of high “consideration.” Our countryman was too wise to imitate Othello in the use of the dagger. He thought it better, as better it was, to assuage his bruised dignity with half a yard square of balmy diplomack diachylon. In the disasters of their friends, people are seldom wanting in a laudable patience. When they are such as do not threaten to end fatally, they become even matter of pleasure. The English fellow-travellers of our sufferer, finding him a little out of spirits, entreated him not to take so slight a business so very seriously. They told him it was the custom of the country; that every country had its customs; that the Turkish manners were a little rough; but that in the main the Turks were a good-natured people; that what would have been a deadly affront any where else, was only a little freedom there; in short, they told him to think no more of the matter, and to try his fortune in another *promenade*. But the ‘Squire, though a little clownish, had some homebred sense. What! have I come, at all this expence and trouble, all the way to Constantinople only to  
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be kicked? Without going beyond my own stable, my groom, for half a crown, would have kicked me to my heart's content. I don't mean to stay in Constantinople eight and forty hours, nor ever to return to this rough, good-natured people, that have their own customs.

In my opinion the 'Squire was in the right. He was satisfied with his first ramble and his first injuries. But reason of state and common-sense are two things. If it were not for this difference, it might not appear of absolute necessity, after having received a certain quantity of buffetings by advance, that we should send a Peer of the realm to the scum of the earth, to collect the debt to the last farthing; and to receive, with infinite aggravation, the same scorns which had been paid to our supplication through a Commoner: But it was proper, I suppose, that the whole of our country, in all it's orders, should have a share of the indignity; and, as in reason, that the higher orders should touch the larger proportion.

This business was not ended, because our dignity was wounded, or because our patience was worn out with contumely and scorn. We had not disgorged one particle of the nauseous doses with which we were so liberally crammed by the mountebanks of Paris, in order to drug and diet us  
into



into perfect tameness. No; we waited, till the morbid strength of our *boulimia* for their physick had exhausted the well-stored dispensary of their empiricism. It is impossible to guess at the term to which our forbearance would have extended. The Regicides were more fatigued with giving blows than the callous cheek of British Diplomacy was hurt in receiving them. They had no way left for getting rid of this mendicant perseverance, but by sending for the Beadle, and forcibly driving our Embassy 'of shreds and patches,' with all its mumping cant, from the inhospitable door of Cannibal Castle—

“Where the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate,  
“Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat.”

I think we might have found, before the rude hand of insolent office was on our shoulder, and the staff of usurped authority brandished over our heads, that contempt of the suppliant is not the best forwarder of a suit; that national disgrace is not the high road to security, much less to power and greatness. Patience, indeed, strongly indicates the love of peace: But mere love does not always lead to enjoyment. It is the power of winning that palm which insures our wearing it. Virtues have their place; and out of their place they hardly deserve the name. They pass into the neighbouring vice. The patience of fortitude, and the endurance

duration of pusillanimity are things very different, as in their principle, so in their effects.

In truth this Declaration, containing a narrative of the first transaction of the kind (and I hope it will be the last) in the intercourse of nations, as a composition, is ably drawn. It does credit to our official style. The report of the Speech of the Minister in a great Assembly, which I have read, is a comment upon the Declaration. Without enquiry how far that report is exact, (inferior I believe it may be to what it would represent,) yet still it reads as a most eloquent and finished performance. Hardly one galling circumstance of the indignities offered by the Directory of Regicide, to the supplications made to that junto in his Majesty's name, has been spared. Every one of the aggravations attendant on these acts of outrage is, with wonderful perspicuity and order, brought forward in it's place, and in the manner most fitted to produce it's effect. They are turned to every point of view in which they can be seen to the best advantage. All the parts are so arranged as to point out their relation, and to furnish a true idea of the spirit of the whole transaction.

This Speech may stand for a model. Never, for the triumphal decoration of any theatre, not

for the decoration of those of Athens and Rome, or even of this theatre of Paris, from the embroideries of Babylon or from the loom of the Gobelins, has there been sent any historick tissue, so truly drawn, so closely and so finely wrought, or in which the forms are brought out in the rich purple of such glowing and blushing colours. It puts me in mind of the piece of tapestry, with which Virgil proposed to adorn the theatre he was to erect to Augustus, upon the banks of the Mincio, who now hides his head in his reeds, and leads his slow and melancholy windings through banks wasted by the barbarians of Gaul. He supposes that the artifice is such, that the figures of the conquered nations in his tapestry are made to play their part, and are confounded in the machine:

——— utque  
 “ *Purpurea intexti tollant aulæa Britanni ;*”

Or as Dryden translates it somewhat paraphrastically, but not less in the spirit of the Prophet than of the Poet,

Where the proud theatres disclose the scene,  
 Which, interwoven, Britons seem to raise,  
 And show the triumph which their shame displays.

It is something wonderful, that the sagacity shown in the Declaration and the Speech (and, so far



far as it goes, greater was never shown) should have failed to discover to the writer and to the speaker, the inseparable relation between the parties to this transaction ; and that nothing can be said to display the imperious arrogance of a base enemy, which does not describe with equal force and equal truth the contemptible figure of an abject embassy to that imperious Power.

It is no less striking, that the same obvious reflexion should not occur to those gentlemen who conducted the opposition to Government. But their thoughts were turned another way. They seem to have been so entirely occupied with the defence of the French Directory, so very eager in finding recriminatory precedents to justify every act of its intolerable insolence, so animated in their accusations of Ministry for not having, at the very outset, made concessions proportioned to the dignity of the great victorious Power we had offended, that every thing concerning the sacrifice in this business of national honour, and of the most fundamental principles in the policy of negotiation, seemed wholly to have escaped them. To this fatal hour, the contention in Parliament appeared in another form, and was animated by another spirit. For three hundred years and more, we have had wars with what stood as Government in France. In all

that period the language of Ministers, whether of boast or of apology, was, that they had left nothing undone for the assertion of the national honour; the Opposition, whether patriotically or factiously, contending, that the Ministers had been oblivious of the national glory, and had made improper sacrifices of that publick interest, which they were bound not only to preserve, but by all fair methods to augment. This total change of tone on both sides of your house, forms itself no inconsiderable revolution; and I am afraid it prognosticates others of still greater importance. The Ministers exhausted the stores of their eloquence in demonstrating, that they had quitted the safe, beaten high-way of treaty between independent Powers; that to pacify the enemy they had made every sacrifice of the national dignity; and that they had offered to immolate at the same shrine the most valuable of the national acquisitions. The Opposition insisted, that the victims were not fat nor fair enough to be offered on the altars of blasphemed Regicide; and it was inferred from thence, that the sacrificial ministers, (who were a sort of intruders in the worship of the new divinity) in their schismatical devotion had discovered more of hypocrisy than zeal. They charged them with a concealed resolution to persevere in what these gentlemen have (in perfect consistency, indeed, with themselves, but

but most irreconcilably with fact and reason) called an unjust and impolitick war.

That day was, I fear, the fatal term of *local* patriotism. On that day, I fear, there was an end of that narrow scheme of relations called our country, with all it's pride, it's prejudices, and it's partial affections. All the little quiet rivulets that watered an humble, a contracted, but not an unfruitful field, are to be lost in the waste expanse, and boundless, barren ocean of the homicide philanthropy of France. It is no longer an object of terror, the aggrandizement of a new power, which teaches as a professor that philanthropy in the chair; whilst it propagates by arms, and establishes by conquest, the comprehensive system of universal fraternity. In what light is all this viewed in a great assembly? The party which takes the lead there has no longer any apprehensions, except those that arise from not being admitted to the closest and most confidential connexions with the metropolis of that fraternity. That reigning party no longer touches on it's favourite subject, the display of those horrors that must attend the existence of a power, with such dispositions and principles, seated in the heart of Europe. It is satisfied to find some loose, ambiguous expressions in it's former declarations, which may set it free from it's professions



fessions and engagements. It always speaks of peace with the Regicides as a great and an undoubted blessing ; and such a blessing, as if obtained, promises, as much as any human disposition of things can promise, security and permanence. It holds out nothing at all definite towards this security. It only seeks, by a restoration, to some of their former owners, of some fragments of the general wreck of Europe, to find a plausible plea for a present retreat from an embarrassing position. As to the future, that party is content to leave it, covered in a night of the most palpable obscurity. It never once has entered into a particle of detail of what our own situation, or that of other Powers must be, under the blessings of the peace we seek. This defect, to my power, I mean to supply; that if any persons should still continue to think an attempt at foresight is any part of the duty of a Statesman, I may contribute my trifle to the materials of his speculation.

As to the other party, the minority of to-day, possibly the majority of to-morrow, small in number, but full of talents and every species of energy, which, upon the avowed ground of being more acceptable to France, is a candidate for the helm of this kingdom, it has never changed from the beginning. It has preserved a perennial consistency. This would be a never-failing source of  
true

true glory, if springing from just and right; but it is truly dreadful if it be an arm of Styx, which springs out of the profoundest depths of a poisoned soil. The French maxims were by these gentlemen at no time condemned. I speak of their language in the most moderate terms. There are many who think that they have gone much further; that they have always magnified and extolled the French maxims; that not in the least disgusted or discouraged by the monstrous evils, which have attended these maxims from the moment of their adoption, both at home and abroad, they still continue to predict, that in due time they must produce the greatest good to the poor human race. They obstinately persist in stating those evils as matter of accident; as things wholly collateral to the system.

It is observed, that this party has never spoken of an ally of Great Britain with the smallest degree of respect or regard; on the contrary, it has generally mentioned them under opprobrious appellations, and in such terms of contempt or execration, as never had been heard before, because no such would have formerly been permitted in our public assemblies. The moment, however, that any of those allies quitted this obnoxious connexion, the party has instantly passed an act of indemnity and oblivion in their favour. After this,

this, no sort of censure on their conduct; no imputation on their character! From that moment their pardon was sealed in a reverential and mysterious silence. With the Gentlemen of this minority, there is no ally, from one end of Europe to the other, with whom we ought not to be ashamed to act. The whole College of the States of Europe is no better than a gang of tyrants. With them all our connexions were broken off at once. We ought to have cultivated France, and France alone, from the moment of her Revolution. On that happy change, all our dread of that nation as a power was to cease. She became in an instant dear to our affections, and one with our interests. All other nations we ought to have commanded not to trouble her sacred throes, whilst in labour to bring into an happy birth her abundant litter of constitutions. We ought to have acted under her auspices, in extending her salutary influence upon every side. From that moment England and France were become natural allies, and all the other States natural enemies. The whole face of the world was changed. What was it to us if she acquired Holland and the Austrian Netherlands? By her conquests she only enlarged the sphere of her beneficence; she only extended the blessings of liberty to so many more foolishly reluctant nations. What was it to England, if by adding these, among the richest and most peopled countries



countries of the world, to her territories, she thereby left no possible link of communication between us and any other Power with whom we could act against her? On this new system of optimism, it is so much the better;—so much the further are we removed from the contact with infectious despotism. No longer a thought of a barrier in the Netherlands to Holland against France. All that is obsolete policy. It is fit that France should have both Holland and the Austrian Netherlands too, as a barrier to her against the attacks of despotism. She cannot multiply her securities too much; and as to our security, it is to be found in her's. Had we cherished her from the beginning, and felt for her when attacked, she, poor good soul, would never have invaded any foreign nation; never murdered her Sovereign and his family; never proscribed, never exiled, never imprisoned, never been guilty of extrajudicial massacre, or of legal murder. All would have been a golden age, full of peace, order, and liberty! and philosophy, ray- ing out from Europe, would have warmed and enlightened the universe: but unluckily, irritable philosophy, the most irritable of all things, was put into a passion, and provoked into ambition abroad and tyranny at home. They find all this very natural and very justifiable. They chuse to forget, that other nations struggling for freedom, have been attacked by their neighbours; or that

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their

their neighbours have otherwise interfered in their affairs. Often have neighbours interfered in favour of Princes against their rebellious subjects; and often in favour of subjects against their Prince. Such cases fill half the pages of history, yet never were they used as an apology, much less as a justification, for atrocious cruelty in Princes, or for general massacre and confiscation on the part of revolted subjects; never as a politick cause for suffering any such powers to aggrandize themselves without limit and without measure. A thousand times have we seen it asserted in publick prints and pamphlets, that if the nobility and priesthood of France had staid at home, their property never would have been confiscated. One would think that none of the clergy had been robbed previous to their deportation, or that their deportation had, on their part, been a voluntary act. One would think that the nobility and gentry, and merchants and bankers, who staid at home, had enjoyed their property in security and repose. The assertors of these positions well know, that the lot of thousands who remained at home was far more terrible; that the most cruel imprisonment was only a harbinger of a cruel and ignominious death; and that in this mother country of freedom, there were no less than *Three Hundred Thousand* at one time in prison. I go no further. I instance only these representations of the

the party as glaring indications of partiality to that sect, to whose dominion they would have left this country nothing to oppose but her own naked force, and consequently subjected us, on every reverse of fortune, to the imminent danger of falling under those very evils in that very system, which are attributed, not to it's own nature, but to the perverseness of others. There is nothing in the world so difficult as to put men in a state of judicial neutrality. A leaning there must ever be, and it is of the first importance to any nation to observe to what side that leaning inclines—whether to our own community or to one with which it is in a state of hostility.

Men are rarely without some sympathy in the sufferings of others; but in the immense and diversified mass of human misery, which may be pitied, but cannot be relieved, in the gross, the mind must make a choice. Our sympathy is always more forcibly attracted towards the misfortunes of certain persons, and in certain descriptions: and this sympathetic attraction discovers, beyond a possibility of mistake, our mental affinities, and elective affections. It is a much surer proof, than the strongest declaration, of a real connexion and of an over-ruling bias in the mind. I am told that the active sympathies of this party have been chiefly, if not wholly attracted to the sufferings of the pa-



triarchal rebels, who were amongst the promulgators of the maxims of the French Revolution, and who have suffered, from their apt and forward scholars, some part of the evils, which they had themselves so liberally distributed to all the other parts of the community. Some of these men, flying from the knives which they had sharpened against their country and it's laws, rebelling against the very powers they had set over themselves by their rebellion against their Sovereign, given up by those very armies to whose faithful attachment they trusted for their safety and support, after they had compleatly debauched all military fidelity in it's source; some of these men, I say, had fallen into the hands of the head of that family, the most illustrious person of which they had three times cruelly imprisoned, and delivered in that state of captivity to those hands, from which they were able to relieve, neither her, nor their own nearest and most venerable kindred. One of these men, connected with this country by no circumstance of birth; not related to any distinguished families here; recommended by no service; endeared to this nation by no act or even expression of kindness; comprehended in no league or common cause; embraced by no laws of publick hospitality; this man was the only one to be found in Europe, in whose favour the British nation, passing judgment, without hearing, on it's almost only ally,

was

was to force, (and that not by soothing interposition, but with every reproach for inhumanity, cruelty, and breach of the laws of war,) from prison. We were to release him from that prison out of which, in abuse of the lenity of Government amidst it's rigour, and in violation of at least an understood parole, he had attempted an escape; an escape excuseable if you will, but naturally productive of strict and vigilant confinement. The earnestness of gentlemen to free this person was the more extraordinary, because there was full as little in him to raise admiration, from any eminent qualities he possessed, as there was to excite an interest, from any that were amiable. A person, not only of no real civil or literary talents, but of no specious appearance of either; and in his military profession, not marked as a leader in any one act of able or successful enterprize—unless his leading on (or his following) the allied army of Amazonian and male cannibal Parisians to Versailles, on the famous fifth of October, 1789, is to make his glory. Any other exploit of his, as a General, I never heard of. But the triumph of general fraternity was but the more signalized by the total want of particular claims in that case; and by postponing all such claims, in a case where they really existed, where they stood embossed, and in a manner forced themselves on the view of common short-sighted benevolence. Whilst, for its improvement,

provement, the humanity of these gentlemen was thus on it's travels, and had got as far off as Olmutz, they never thought of a place and a person much nearer to them, or of moving an instruction to Lord Malmesbury in favour of their own suffering countryman, Sir Sydney Smith.

This officer, having attempted, with great gallantry, to cut out a vessel from one of the enemy's harbours, was taken after an obstinate resistance; such as obtained him the marked respect of those who were witnesses of his valour, and knew the circumstances in which it was displayed. Upon his arrival at Paris, he was instantly thrown into prison; where the nature of his situation will best be understood, by knowing, that amongst its *mitigations*, was the permission to walk occasionally in the court, and to enjoy the privilege of shaving himself. On the old system of feelings and principles, his sufferings might have been entitled to consideration, and even in a comparison with those of Citizen la Fayette, to a priority in the order of compassion. If the Ministers had neglected to take any steps in his favour, a declaration of the sense of the House of Commons would have stimulated them to their duty. If they had caused a representation to be made, such a proceeding would have added force to it. If reprisal should be thought adviseable, the address of the House would have



have given an additional sanction to a measure, which would have been, indeed, justifiable without any other sanction than it's own reason. But no. Nothing at all like it. In fact, the merit of Sir Sydney Smith, and his claim on British compassion, was of a kind altogether different from that which interested so deeply the authors of the motion in favour of Citizen la Fayette. In my humble opinion, Captain Sir Sydney Smith has another sort of merit with the British nation, and something of a higher claim on British humanity than Citizen de la Fayette. Faithful, zealous, and ardent in the service of his King and Country; full of spirit; full of resources; going out of the beaten road, but going right, because his uncommon enterprize was not conducted by a vulgar judgment;—in his profession, Sir Sydney Smith might be considered as a distinguished person, if any person could well be distinguished in a service in which scarce a Commander can be named without putting you in mind of some action of intrepidity, skill, and vigilance, that has given them a fair title to contend with any men and in any age. But I will say nothing farther of the merits of Sir Sydney Smith: The mortal animosity of the Regicide enemy supercedes all other panegyrick. Their hatred is a judgment in his favour without appeal. At present he is lodged in the tower of the Temple, the last prison of Louis the Sixteenth, and the last but one of

of Maria Antonietta of Austria; the prison of Louis the Seventeenth; the prison of Elizabeth of Bourbon. There he lies, unpitied by the grand philanthropy, to meditate upon the fate of those who are faithful to their King and Country. Whilst this prisoner, secluded from intercourse, was indulging in these cheering reflections, he might possibly have had the further consolation of learning (by means of the insolent exultation of his guards) that there was an English Ambassador at Paris; he might have had the proud comfort of hearing, that this Ambassador had the honour of passing his mornings in respectful attendance at the office of a Regicide pettifogger; and that in the evening he relaxed in the amusements of the opera, and in the spectacle of an audience totally new; an audience in which he had the pleasure of seeing about him not a single face that he could formerly have known in Paris; but in the place of that company, one indeed more than equal to it in display of gaiety, splendour and luxury; a set of abandoned wretches, squandering in insolent riot the spoils of their bleeding country. A subject of profound reflection both to the prisoner and to the Ambassador.

Whether all the matter upon which I have grounded my opinion of this last party be fully authenticated or not, must be left to those who have  
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had the opportunity of a nearer view of it's conduct, and who have been more attentive in their perusal of the writings, which have appeared in it's favour. But for my part, I have never heard the gross facts on which I ground my idea of their marked partiality to the reigning Tyranny in France, in any part, denied. I am not surprized at all this. Opinions, as they sometimes follow, so they frequently guide and direct the affections; and men may become more attached to the country of their principles, than to the country of their birth. What I have stated here is only to mark the spirit which seems to me, though in somewhat different ways, to actuate our great party-leaders; and to trace this first pattern of a negotiation to it's true source.

Such is the present state of our publick councils. Well might I be ashamed of what seems to be a censure of two great factions, with the two most eloquent men, which this country ever saw, at the head of them, if I had found that either of them could support their conduct by any example in the history of their country. I should very much prefer their judgment to my own, if I were not obliged, by an infinitely overbalancing weight of authority, to prefer the collected wisdom of ages to the abilities of any two men living. I return to



the Declaration, with which the history of the abortion of a treaty with the Regicides is closed.

After such an elaborate display had been made of the injustice and insolence of an enemy, who seems to have been irritated by every one of the means, which had been commonly used with effect to soothe the rage of intemperate power, the natural result would be, that the scabbard, in which we in vain attempted to plunge our sword, should have been thrown away with scorn. It would have been natural, that, rising in the fulness of their might, insulted majesty, despised dignity, violated justice, rejected supplication, patience goaded into fury, would have poured out all the length of the reins upon all the wrath which they had so long restrained. It might have been expected, that emulous of the glory of the youthful hero\* in alliance with him, touched by the example of what one man, well formed and well placed, may do in the most desperate state of affairs, convinced there is a courage of the Cabinet full as powerful, and far less vulgar than that of the field, our Minister would have changed the whole line of that unprosperous prudence, which hitherto had produced all the effects of the blindest temerity. If

\* The Archduke Charles of Austria.

he found his situation full of danger, (and I do not deny that it is perilous in the extreme) he must feel that it is also full of glory; and that he is placed on a stage, than which no Muse of fire that had ascended the highest heaven of invention, could imagine any thing more awful and august. It was hoped, that in this swelling scene, in which he moved with some of the first Potentates of Europe for his fellow actors, and with so many of the rest for the anxious spectators of a part, which, as he plays it, determines for ever their destiny and his own, like Ulysses, in the unravelling point of the epic story, he would have thrown off his patience and his rags together; and stripped of unworthy disguises, he would have stood forth in the form, and in the attitude of an hero. On that day, it was thought he would have assumed the port of Mars; that he would bid to be brought forth from their hideous kennel (where his scrupulous tenderness had too long immured them) those impatient dogs of war, whose fierce regards affright even the Minister of Vengeance that feeds them; that he would let them loose, in famine, fever, plagues, and death, upon a guilty race, to whose frame, and to all whose habit, order, peace, religion, and virtue, are alien and abhorrent. It was expected that he would at last have thought of active and effectual war; that he would no longer amuse the

British Lion in the chace of mice and rats ; that he would no longer employ the whole naval power of Great Britain, once the terrour of the world, to prey upon the miserable remains of a peddling commerce, which the enemy did not regard, and from which none could profit. It was expected that he would have re-asserted the justice of his cause ; that he would have re-animated whatever remained to him of his allies, and endeavoured to recover those whom their fears had led astray ; that he would have re-kindled the martial ardour of his citizens ; that he would have held out to them the example of their ancestry, the assertor of Europe, and the scourge of French ambition ; that he would have reminded them of a posterity, which if this nefarious robbery, under the fraudulent name and false colour, of a government, should in full power be seated in the heart of Europe, must for ever be consigned to vice, impiety, barbarism, and the most ignominious slavery of body and mind. In so holy a cause it was presumed, that he would, (as in the beginning of the war he did) have opened all the temples ; and with prayer, with fasting, and with supplication (better directed than to the grim Moloch of Regicide in France), have called upon us to raise that united cry, which has so often stormed Heaven, and with a pious violence forced down blessings upon a repentant people. It was hoped



hoped that when he had invoked upon his endeavours the favourable regard of the Protector of the human race, it would be seen that his menaces to the enemy, and his prayers to the Almighty, were, not followed, but accompanied, with correspondent action. It was hoped that his shrilling trumpet should be heard, not to announce a shew, but to found a charge.

Such a conclusion to such a Declaration and such a Speech, would have been a thing of course; so much a thing of course, that I will be bold to say, if in any ancient history, the Roman for instance, (supposing that in Rome the matter of such a detail could have been furnished) a Consul had gone through such a long train of proceedings, and that there was a chasm in the manuscripts by which we had lost the conclusion of the speech and the subsequent part of the narrative, all criticks would agree, that a *Freinshemius* would have been thought to have managed the supplementary business of a continuator most unskilfully, and to have supplied the hiatus most improbably, if he had not filled up the gaping space, in a manner somewhat similar, (though better executed) to what I have imagined. But too often different is rational conjecture from melancholy fact. This exordium, as contrary to all the rules of rhetorick, as to those more essential rules of policy which  
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our situation would dictate, is intended as a prelude to a deadening and disheartening proposition; as if all that a Minister had to fear in a war of his own conducting, was, that the people should pursue it with too ardent a zeal. Such a tone, as I guessed the Minister would have taken, I am very sure, is the true, unassuming, unsophisticated language of genuine natural feeling under the smart of patience exhausted and abused. Such a conduct as the facts stated in the Declaration gave room to expect, is that which true wisdom would have dictated under the impression of those genuine feelings. Never was there a jar or discord, between genuine sentiment and sound policy. Never, no, never, did Nature say one thing and Wisdom say another. Nor are sentiments of elevation in themselves turgid and unnatural. Nature is never more truly herself, than in her grandest forms. The Apollo of Belvedere (if the universal robber has yet left him at Belvedere) is as much in Nature, as any figure from the pencil of Rembrandt, or any clown in the rustic revels of Teniers. Indeed it is when a great nation is in great difficulties, that minds must exalt themselves to the occasion, or all is lost. Strong passion under the direction of a feeble reason feeds a low fever, which serves only to destroy the body that entertains it. But vehement passion does not always indicate an infirm judgment. It often accompanies, and actuates, and

is even auxiliary to a powerful understanding; and when they both conspire and act harmoniously, their force is great to destroy disorder within, and to repel injury from abroad. If ever there was a time that calls on us for no vulgar conception of things, and for exertions in no vulgar strain, it is the awful hour that Providence has now appointed to this nation. Every little measure is a great error; and every great error will bring on no small ruin. Nothing can be directed above the mark that we must aim at: Every thing below it is absolutely thrown away.

Except with the addition of the unheard-of insult offered to our Ambassador by his rude expulsion, we are never to forget that the point on which the negotiation with De la Croix broke off, was exactly that which had stifled in it's cradle the negotiation we had attempted with Barthélémy. Each of these transactions, concluded with a manifesto upon our part: but the last of our manifestoes very materially differed from the first. The first Declaration stated, that "*nothing was left*" but to prosecute a war *equally just and necessary.*" In the second, the justice and necessity of the war is dropped: The sentence importing that nothing was left but the prosecution of such a war, disappears also. Instead of this resolution to prosecute the war, we sink  
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into a whining lamentation on the abrupt termination of the treaty. We have nothing left but the last resource of female weakness, of helpless infancy, of doting decrepitude,—wailing and lamentation. We cannot even utter a sentiment of vigour—"his Majesty has only to lament." A poor possession, to be left to a great Monarch! Mark the effect produced on our councils by continued insolence, and inveterate hostility! We grow more malleable under their blows. In reverential silence, we smother the cause and origin of the war. On that fundamental article of faith, we leave every one to abound in his own sense. In the Minister's speech, glossing on the Declaration, it is indeed mentioned; but very feebly. The lines are so faintly drawn as hardly to be traced. They only make a part of our *consolation* in the circumstances which we so dolefully lament. We rest our merits on the humility, the earnestness of solicitation, and the perfect good faith of those submissions, which have been used to persuade our Regicide enemies to grant us some sort of peace. Not a word is said, which might not have been said as well said, and much better too, if the British nation had appeared in the simple character of a penitent convinced of his errors and offences, and offering, by penances, by pilgrimages, and by all the modes of expiation ever devised by anxious, restlefs

restless guilt, to make all the atonement in his miserable power.

The Declaration ends as I have before quoted it, with a solemn voluntary pledge, the most full and the most solemn that ever was given, of our resolution (if so it may be called) to enter again into the very same course. It requires nothing more of the Regicides, than to furnish some sort of excuse, some sort of colourable pretext, for our renewing the supplications of innocence at the feet of guilt. It leaves the moment of negotiation, a most important moment, to the choice of the enemy. He is to regulate it according to the convenience of his affairs. He is to bring it forward at that time when it may best serve to establish his authority at home, and to extend his power abroad. A dangerous assurance for this nation to give, whether it is broken or whether it is kept. As all treaty was broken off, and broken off in the manner we have seen, the field of future conduct ought to be reserved free and unincumbered to our future discretion. As to the sort of condition prefixed to the pledge, namely, "that the enemy should be disposed to enter into the work of general pacification with the spirit of reconciliation and equity," this phraseology cannot possibly be considered otherwise, than as so many words thrown in to fill the sentence, and to round it to the

ear. We prefixed the same plausible conditions to any renewal of the negotiation, in our manifesto on the rejection of our proposals at Basle. We did not consider those conditions as binding. We opened a much more serious negotiation without any sort of regard to them; and there is no new negotiation, which we can possibly open upon fewer indications of conciliation and equity, than were to be discovered, when we entered into our last at Paris. Any of the slightest pretences, any of the most loose, formal, equivocating expressions, would justify us under the peroration of this piece, in again sending the last, or some other Lord Malmesbury to Paris.

I hope I misunderstand this pledge; or, that we shall shew no more regard to it, than we have done to all the faith, that we have plighted to vigour and resolution, in our former declaration. If I am to understand the conclusion of the declaration to be what unfortunately it seems to me, we make an engagement with the enemy, without any correspondent engagement on his side. We seem to have cut ourselves off from any benefit which an intermediate state of things might furnish to enable us totally to overturn that power, so little connected with moderation and justice. By holding out no hope, either to the justly discontented in France, or to any foreign power, and leaving the  
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re-commencement of all treaty to this identical juncture of assassins, we do in effect assure and guarantee to them, the full possession of the rich fruits of their confiscations, of their murders of men, women, and children, and of all the multiplied, endless, nameless iniquities by which they have obtained their power. We guarantee to them the possession of a country, such and so situated as France, round, entire, immensely perhaps augmented.

Well! some will say, in this case we have only submitted to the nature of things. The nature of things is, I admit, a sturdy adversary. This might be alledged as a plea for our attempt at a treaty. But what plea of that kind can be alledged, after the treaty was dead and gone, in favour of this posthumous declaration? No necessity has driven us to *that* pledge. It is without a counterpart even in expectation. And what can be stated to obviate the evil which that solitary engagement must produce on the understandings or the fears of men? I ask, what have the Regicides promised you in return, in case *you* should shew what *they* would call dispositions to conciliation and equity, whilst you are giving that pledge from the throne, and engaging Parliament to counter-secure it? It is an awful consideration. It was on the very day of the date of this wonderful pledge\*, in which

\* Dec. 27, 1796.

we assumed the directorial Government as lawful, and in which we engaged ourselves to treat with them whenever they pleased ; it was on that very day, the Regicide fleet was weighing anchor from one of your harbours, where it had remained four days in perfect quiet. These harbours of the British dominions are the ports of France. They are of no use, but to protect an enemy from your best Allies, the storms of Heaven, and his own rashness. Had the *West* of Ireland been an unportuous coast, the French naval power would have been undone. The enemy uses the moment for hostility, without the least regard to your future dispositions of equity and conciliation. They go out of what were once your harbours, and they return to them at their pleasure. Eleven days they had the full use of Bantry Bay, and at length their fleet returns from their harbour of Bantry to their harbour of Brest. Whilst you are invoking the propitious spirit of Regicide equity and conciliation, they answer you with an attack. They turn out the pacifick bearer of your “ how do you does,” Lord Malmesbury ; and they return your visit, and their “ thanks for your obliging enquiries,” by their old practised assassins *Hoche*. They come to attack—What ? A town, a fort, a naval station ? They come to attack your King, your Constitution, and the very being of that Parliament, which was holding out to them these pledges, together with the entireness of the Empire, the  
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Laws, Liberties, and Properties of all the people. We know that they meditated the very same invasion, and for the very same purposes, upon this Kingdom; and had the coast been as opportune, would have effected it.

Whilst *you* are in vain torturing your invention to assure them of *your* sincerity and good faith, they have left no doubt concerning *their* good faith, and *their* sincerity towards those to whom they have engaged their honour. To their power they have been true to the only pledge they have ever yet given to you, or to any of yours, I mean the solemn engagement which they entered into with the deputation of traitors who appeared at their bar, from England and from Ireland, in 1792. They have been true and faithful to the engagement which they had made more largely; that is, their engagement to give effectual aid to insurrection and treason, wherever they might appear in the world. We have seen the British Declaration. This is the counter-declaration of the Directory. This is the reciprocal pledge which Regicide amity gives to the conciliatory pledges of Kings! But, thank God, such pledges cannot exist single. They have no counterpart; and if they had, the enemy's conduct cancels such declarations; and I trust, along with them, cancels every



every thing of mischief and dishonour that they contain.

There is one thing in this business which appears to be wholly unaccountable, or accountable, on a supposition I dare not entertain for a moment. I cannot help asking, Why all this pains, to clear the British Nation of ambition, perfidy, and the insatiate thirst of war? At what period of time was it that our country has deserved that load of infamy, of which nothing but preternatural humiliation in language and conduct can serve to clear us? If we have deserved this kind of evil fame from any thing we have done in a state of prosperity, I am sure, that it is not an abject conduct in adversity that can clear our reputation. Well is it known that ambition can creep as well as soar. The pride of no person in a flourishing condition is more justly to be dreaded, than that of him who is mean and cringing under a doubtful and unprosperous fortune. But it seems it was thought necessary to give some out-of-the-way proofs of our sincerity, as well as of our freedom from ambition. Is then fraud and falsehood become the distinctive character of Englishmen? Whenever your enemy chooses to accuse you of perfidy and ill faith, will you put it into his power to throw you into the purgatory of self-

self-humiliation? Is his charge equal to the finding of the grand jury of Europe, and sufficient to put you upon your trial? But on that trial I will defend the English Ministry. I am sorry that on some points I have, on the principles I have always opposed, so good a defence to make. They were not the first to begin the war. They did not excite the general confederacy in Europe, which was so properly formed on the alarm given by the Jacobinism of France. They did not begin with an hostile aggression on the Regicides or any of their allies. These parricides of their own country, disciplining themselves for foreign by domestick violence, were the first to attack a power that was our ally, by nature, by habit, and by the sanction of multiplied treaties. Is it not true, that they were the first to declare war upon this kingdom? Is every word in the declaration from Downing-Street, concerning their conduct, and concerning ours and that of our allies, so obviously false; that it is necessary to give some new invented proofs of our good faith in order to expunge the memory of all this perfidy?

We know that over-labouring a point of this kind, has the direct contrary effect from what we wish. We know that there is a legal presumption against men *quando se nimis purgitant*; and if a charge of ambition is not refuted by an affected humility,

mility, certainly the character of fraud and perfidy is still less to be washed away by indications of meanness. Fraud and prevarication are servile vices. They sometimes grow out of the necessities, always out of the habits of slavish and degenerate spirits: and on the theatre of the world, it is not by assuming the mask of a Davus or a Geta that an actor will obtain credit for manly simplicity and a liberal openness of proceeding. It is an erect countenance; it is a firm adherence to principle; it is a power of resisting false shame and frivolous fear, that assert our good faith and honour, and assure to us the confidence of mankind. Therefore all these Negotiations, and all the Declarations with which they were preceded and followed, can only serve to raise presumptions against that good faith and publick integrity, the same of which to preserve inviolate is so much the interest and duty of every nation.

The pledge is an engagement "to all Europe." This is the more extraordinary, because it is a pledge, which no power in Europe, whom I have yet heard of, has thought proper to require at our hands. I am not in the secrets of office; and therefore I may be excused for proceeding upon probabilities and exteriour indications. I have surveyed all Europe from the east to the west, from the north to the south, in search of this call upon



us to purge ourselves of “subtle *duplicity* and a *punick* style” in our proceedings. I have not heard that his Excellency the Ottoman Ambassador has expressed his doubts of the British sincerity in our Negotiation with the most unchristian Republick lately set up at our door. What sympathy, in that quarter, may have introduced a remonstrance upon the want of faith in this nation, I cannot positively say. If it exists, it is in Turkish or Arabick, and possibly is not yet translated. But none of the nations which compose the old Christian world have I yet heard as calling upon us for those judicial purgations and ordeals, by fire and water, which we have chosen to go through;—for the other great proof, by battle, we seem to decline.

For whose use, entertainment, or instruction, are all those over-strained and over-laboured proceedings in Council, in Negotiation, and in Speeches in Parliament, intended? What Royal Cabinet is to be enriched with these high-finished pictures of the arrogance of the sworn enemies of Kings, and the meek patience of a British Administration? In what heart is it intended to kindle pity towards our multiplied mortifications and disgraces? At best it is superfluous. What nation is unacquainted with the haughty disposition of the common enemy of all

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nations? It has been more than seen, it has been felt; not only by those who have been the victims of their imperious rapacity, but, in a degree, by those very powers who have consented to establish this robbery, that they might be able to copy it, and with impunity to make new usurpations of their own. The King of Prussia has hypothecated in trust to the Regicides his rich and fertile territories on the Rhine, as a pledge of his zeal and affection to the cause of liberty and equality. He has seen them robbed with unbounded liberty, and with the most levelling equality. The woods are wasted; the country is ravaged; property is confiscated; and the people are put to bear a double yoke, in the exactions of a tyrannical Government and in the contributions of an hostile irruption. Is it to satisfy the Court of Berlin, that the Court of London is to give the same sort of pledge of its sincerity and good faith to the French Directory? It is not that heart full of sensibility,—it is not Luchefini, the Minister of his Prussian Majesty, the late ally of England, and the present ally of its enemy, who has demanded this pledge of our sincerity, as the price of the renewal of the long lease of his sincere friendship to this kingdom.

It is not to our enemy, the now faithful ally of Regicide, late the faithful ally of Great Britain, the Catholick King, that we address our doleful lamentation:

lamentation : It is not to the *Prince of Peace*, whose declaration of war was one of the first auspicious omens of general tranquillity, which our dove-like Ambaffador, with the olive branch in his beak, was faluted with at his entrance into the ark of clean birds at Paris.

Surely it is not to the Tetrarch of Sardinia, now the faithful ally of a power who has feized upon all his fortreffes, and confiscated the oldeft dominions of his house ; it is not to this once powerful, once respected, and once cherifhed ally of Great Britain, that we mean to prove the fincerity of the peace which we offered to make at his expence. Or is it to him we are to prove the arrogance of the power who, under the name of friend, oppreffes him, and the poor remains of his fubjects, with all the ferocity of the moft cruel enemy ?

It is not to Holland, under the name of an ally, laid under a permanent military contribution, filled with their double garrifon of barbarous Jacobin troops, and ten times more barbarous Jacobin clubs and affemblies, that we find ourfelves obliged to give this pledge.

Is it to Genoa, that we make this kind promife ; a ftate which the Regicides were to defend in a favourable neutrality, but whose neutrality has



been, by the gentle influence of Jacobin authority, forced into the trammels of an alliance; whose alliance has been secured by the admiffion of French garrisons; and whose peace has been for ever ratified by a forced declaration of war againft ourselves?

It is not the Grand Duke of Tuscany who claims this Declaration; not the Grand Duke, who for his early fincerity, for his love of peace, and for his entire confidence in the amity of the affaffins of his Houfe, has been complimented in the Britifh Parliament with the name of “*the wifeft Sovereign in Europe*.”—It is not this pacifick Solomon, or his philofophick cudgelled Miniftry, cudgelled by Englifh and by French, whose wifdom and philofophy between them, have placed Leghorn in the hands of the enemy of the Auftrian family, and driven the only profitable commerce of Tuscany from it’s only port. It is not this Sovereign, a far more able Statesman than any of the *Medici* in whose chair he fits; it is not the philofopher *Carletti*, more ably fpeculative than *Galileo*, more profoundly politick than *Machiavel*, that call upon us fo loudly to give the fame happy proofs of the fame good faith to the Republick, always the fame, always one and indivifible.

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It is not Venice, whose principal cities the enemy has appropriated to himself, and scornfully desired the State to indemnify itself from the Emperor, that we wish to convince of the pride and the despotism of an enemy, who loads us with his scoffs and buffets.

It is not for his Holiness we intend this consolatory declaration of our own weakness and of the tyrannous temper of his grand enemy. That Prince has known both the one and the other from the beginning. The artists of the French Revolution, had given their very first essays and sketches of robbery and desolation against his territories, in a far more cruel "murdering piece" than had ever entered into the imagination of painter or poet. Without ceremony, they tore from his cherishing arms, the possessions which he held for five hundred years, undisturbed by all the ambition of all the ambitious Monarchs who, during that period, have reigned in France. Is it to him, in whose wrong we have in our late negotiation ceded his now unhappy countries near the Rhine, lately amongst the most flourishing (perhaps the most flourishing for their extent) of all the countries upon earth, that we are to prove the sincerity of our resolution to make peace with the Republic of barbarism? That venerable Potentate and Pontiff, is  
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sunk deep into the vale of years ; he is half disarm-  
 ed by his peaceful character ; his dominions are  
 more than half disarmed by a peace of two hundred  
 years, defended as they were, not by force but by  
 reverence ; yet in all these straits, we see him dis-  
 play, amidst the recent ruins and the new deface-  
 ments of his plundered capital, along with the mild  
 and decorated piety of the modern, all the spirit  
 and magnanimity of ancient Rome ? Does he, who,  
 though himself unable to defend them, nobly re-  
 fused to receive pecuniary compensations for the pro-  
 tection he owed to his people of Avignon, Carpen-  
 tras, and the Venaisin ;—does he want proofs of our  
 good disposition to deliver over that people, with-  
 out any security for them, or any compensation to  
 their Sovereign, to this cruel enemy ? Does he want  
 to be satisfied of the sincerity of our humiliation  
 to France, who has seen his free, fertile and happy  
 city and state of Bologna, the cradle of regenerated  
 law, the seat of sciences and of arts, so hideously  
 metamorphosed, whilst he was crying to Great  
 Britain for aid, and offering to purchase that aid  
 at any price ? Is it him, who sees that chosen spot  
 of plenty and delight converted into a Jacobin fe-  
 rocious Republick, dependent on the homicides  
 of France ? Is it him, who, from the miracles  
 of his beneficent industry, has done a work which  
 defied the power of the Roman Emperors, though  
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with an enthralled world to labour for them ; is it him, who has drained and cultivated the *Pontine Marshes*, that we are to satisfy of our cordial spirit of conciliation, with those who, in their equity, are restoring Holland again to the Seas, whose maxims poison more than the exhalations of the most deadly fens, and who turn all the fertilities of Nature and of Art into an howling desert ? Is it to him, that we are to demonstrate the good faith of our submissions to the cannibal Republick ; to him who is commanded to deliver up into their hands Ancona and Civita Vecchia, seats of commerce, raised by the wise and liberal labours and expences of the present and late Pontiffs ; ports not more belonging to the Ecclesiastical State than to the commerce of Great Britain ; thus wresting from his hands the power of the keys of the centre of Italy, as before they had taken possession of the keys of the northern part, from the hands of the unhappy King of Sardinia, the natural ally of England ? Is it to him we are to prove our good faith in the peace which we are soliciting to receive from the hands of his and our robbers, the enemies of all arts, all sciences, all civilization, and all commerce ?

Is it to the Cispadane or to the Transpadane Republicks, which have been forced to bow under the  
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galling yoke of French liberty, that we address all these pledges of our sincerity and love of peace with their unnatural parents?

Are we by this declaration to satisfy the King of Naples whom we have left to struggle as he can, after our abdication of Corsica, and the flight of the whole naval force of England out of the whole circuit of the Mediterranean, abandoning our allies, our commerce, and the honour of a nation, once the protectress of all other nations, because strengthened by the independence, and enriched by the commerce of them all? By the express provisions of a recent treaty, we had engaged with the King of Naples to keep a naval force in the Mediterranean. But, good God! was a treaty at all necessary for this? The uniform policy of this kingdom as a State, and eminently so as a commercial State, has at all times led us to keep a powerful squadron and a commodious naval station in that central sea, which borders upon, and which connects, a far greater number and variety of States, European, Asiatick, and African, than any other. Without such a naval force, France must become despotick mistress of that sea, and of all the countries whose shores it washes. Our commerce must become vassal to her, and dependent on her will. Since  
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passions) would have looked on the present assassins of France, will not be very prompt to believe that the young King of Sweden has made this kind of requisition to the King of Great Britain, and has given this kind of auspice of his new government.

I speak last of the most important of all. It certainly was not the late Empress of Russia at whose instance we have given this pledge. It is not the new Emperour, the inheritour of so much glory, and placed in a situation of so much delicacy and difficulty for the preservation of that inheritance, who calls on England, the natural ally of his dominions, to deprive herself of her power of action, and to bind herself to France. France at no time, and in none of it's fashions, least of all in it's last, has been ever looked upon as the friend either of Russia or of Great Britain. Every thing good, I trust, is to be expected from this Prince, whatever may be, without authority, given out of an influence over his mind possessed by that only Potentate, from whom he has any thing to apprehend, or with whom he has much even to discuss.

This Sovereign knows, I have no doubt, and feels, on what sort of bottom is to be laid the foundation of a Russian Throne. He knows what a rock of  
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native granite is to form the pedestal of his statue, who is to emulate Peter the Great. His renown will be in continuing with ease and safety, what his predecessor was obliged to achieve through mighty struggles. He is sensible, that his business is not to innovate, but to secure and to establish; that reformations at this day are attempts at best of ambiguous utility. He will revere his father with the piety of a son; but in his government he will imitate the policy of his mother. His father, with many excellent qualities, had a short reign; because, being a native Russian, he was unfortunately advised to act in the spirit of a foreigner. His mother reigned over Russia three and thirty years with the greatest glory; because, with the disadvantage of being a foreigner born, she made herself a Russian. A wise Prince like the present will improve his country; but it will be cautiously and progressively, upon its own native ground-work of religion, manners, habitudes, and alliances. If I prognosticate right, it is not the Emperour of Russia that ever will call for extravagant proofs of our desire to reconcile ourselves to the irreconcilable enemy of all Thrones.

I do not know why I should not include America among the European Powers, because she is of European origin; and has not yet, like France,

destroyed all traces of manners, laws, opinions, and usages which she drew from Europe. As long as that Europe shall have any possessions either in the southern or the northern parts of that America, even separated as it is by the ocean, it must be considered as a part of the European system. It is not America, menaced with internal ruin from the attempts to plant Jacobinism instead of Liberty in that country ; it is not America, whose independence is directly attacked by the French, the enemies of the independence of all nations, that calls upon us to give security by disarming ourselves in a treacherous peace. By such a peace, we shall deliver the Americans, their liberty, and their order, without resource, to the mercy of their imperious allies, who will have peace or neutrality with no state, which is not ready to join her in war against England.

Having run round the whole circle of the European system wherever it acts, I must affirm, that all the foreign Powers who are not leagued with France for the utter destruction of all balance through Europe and throughout the world, demand other assurances from this kingdom than are given in that Declaration. They require assurances, not of the sincerity of our good dispositions towards the usurpation in France, but of our affection to-  
wards



wards the College of the antient States of Europe, and pledges of our constancy, our fidelity, and of our fortitude in resisting to the last the power that menaces them all. The apprehension from which they wish to be delivered cannot be from any thing they dread in the ambition of England. Our power must be their strength. They hope more from us than they fear. I am sure the only ground of their hope, and of our hope, is in the greatness of mind hitherto shewn by the people of this nation, and it's adherence to the unalterable principles of it's antient policy, whatever Government may finally prevail in France. I have entered into this detail of the wishes and expectations of the European Powers, in order to point out more clearly, not so much what their disposition, as (a consideration of far greater importance) what their situation demands, according as that situation is related to the Regicide Republick and to this Kingdom.

Then if it is not to satisfy the foreign Powers we make this assurance, to what Power at home is it that we pay all this humiliating court? Not to the old Whigs or to the antient Tories of this Kingdom; if any memory of such antient divisions still exists amongst us. To which of the principles of these parties is this assurance agreeable? Is it to the Whigs we are to recommend the aggrandisement

dissement of France, and the subversion of the balance of power? Is it to the Tories we are to commend our eagerness to cement ourselves with the enemies of Royalty and Religion? But if these parties, which by their dissensions have so often distracted the Kingdom, which by their union have once saved it, and which by their collision and mutual resistance, have preserved the variety of this Constitution in it's unity, be (as I believe they are) nearly extinct by the growth of new ones, which have their roots in the present circumstances of the times—I wish to know, to which of these new descriptions this Declaration is addressed? It can hardly be to those persons, who, in the new distribution of parties, consider the conservation in England of the antient order of things, as necessary to preserve order every where else, and who regard the general conservation of order in other countries, as reciprocally necessary to preserve the same state of things in those Islands. That party never can wish to see Great Britain pledge herself to give the lead and the ground of advantage and superiority to the France of to-day, in any treaty which is to settle Europe. I insist upon it, that so far from expecting such an engagement, they are generally stupefied and confounded with it. That the other party which demands great changes here, and is so pleased to see them every where else, which

which party I call Jacobin, that this faction does from the bottom of it's heart, approve the declaration, and does erect it's crest upon the engagement, there can be little doubt. To them it may be addressed with propriety, for it answers their purposes in every point.

The party in Opposition within the House of Lords and Commons, it is irreverent, and half a breach of privilege (far from my thoughts) to consider as Jacobin. This party has always denied the existence of such a faction; and has treated the machinations of those, whom you and I call Jacobins, as so many forgeries and fictions of the Minister and his adherents, to find a pretext for destroying freedom, and setting up an arbitrary power in this Kingdom. However, whether this Minority has a leaning towards the French system, or only a charitable toleration of those who lean that way, it is certain, that they have always attacked the sincerity of the Minister in the same modes, and on the very same grounds, and nearly in the same terms, with the Directory. It must, therefore, be at the tribunal of the Minority, (from the whole tenour of the speech) that the Minister appeared to consider himself obliged to purge himself of duplicity. It was at their bar that he held up his hand. It was on their *sellette* that he seemed to answer interrogatories;



interrogatories; it was on their principles that he defended his whole conduct. They certainly take what the French call the *haute du pavé*. They have loudly called for the negotiation. It was accorded to them. They engaged their support of the war with vigour, in case Peace was not granted on honourable terms. Peace was not granted on any terms, honourable or shameful. Whether these judges, few in number but powerful in jurisdiction, are satisfied; whether they to whom this new pledge is hypothecated, have redeemed their own; whether they have given one particle more of their support to Ministry, or even favoured them with their good opinion, or their candid construction, I leave it to those, who recollect that memorable debate, to determine.

The fact is, that neither this Declaration, nor the negotiation which is its subject, could serve any one good purpose, foreign or domestick; it could conduce to no end either with regard to allies or neutrals. It tends neither to bring back the misled; nor to give courage to the fearful; nor to animate and confirm those, who are hearty and zealous in the cause.

I hear it has been said (though I can scarcely believe it) that a distinguished person in an Assembly

sembly, where if there be less of the torrent and tempest of eloquence, more guarded expression is to be expected, that, indeed, there was no just ground of hope in this business from the beginning.

It is plain, that this noble person, however conversant in negotiation, having been employed in no less than four embassies, and in two hemispheres, and in one of those negotiations having fully experienced what it was to proceed to treaty without previous encouragement, was not at all consulted in this experiment. For his Majesty's principal Minister declared, on the very same day, in another House, "his Majesty's deep and sincere regret at it's unfortunate and abrupt termination, so different from the wishes and hopes that were entertained;"—and in other parts of the speech speaks of this abrupt termination as a great disappointment, and as a fall from sincere endeavours and sanguine expectation. Here are, indeed, sentiments diametrically opposite, as to the hopes with which the negotiation was commenced and carried on, and what is curious is, the grounds of the hopes on the one side, and the despair on the other, are exactly the same. The logical conclusion from the common premises, is indeed in favour of the noble Lord, for they are agreed that the enemy was far from giving the least de-

gree of countenance to any such hopes; and that they proceeded, in spite of every discouragement which the enemy had thrown in their way. But there is another material point in which they do not seem to differ; that is to say, the result of the desperate experiment of the noble Lord, and of the promising attempt of the Great Minister, in satisfying the people of England, and in causing discontent to the people of France; or, as the Minister expresses it, “in uniting England and in dividing France.”

For my own part, though I perfectly agreed with the noble Lord, that the attempt was desperate, so desperate indeed, as to deserve *his* name of an experiment, yet no fair man can possibly doubt, that the Minister was perfectly sincere in his proceeding, and that, from his ardent wishes for peace with the Regicides, he was led to conceive hopes which were founded rather in his vehement desires than in any rational ground of political speculation. Convinced as I am of this, it had been better, in my humble opinion, that persons of great name and authority had abstained from those topics which had been used to call the Minister's sincerity into doubt, and had not adopted the sentiments of the Directory upon the subject of all our negotiations; for the noble Lord expressly



says, that the experiment was made for the satisfaction of the country. The Directory says exactly the same thing. Upon granting, in consequence of our supplications, the passport to Lord Malmesbury, in order to remove all sort of hope from it's success, they charged all our previous steps, even to that moment of submissive demand to be admitted to their presence, on duplicity and perfidy; and assumed, that the object of all the steps, we had taken was that "of justifying the continuance of the war in the eyes of the English nation, and of throwing all the odium of it upon the French:" "The English nation (said they) supports impatiently the continuance of the war, and a *reply must be made to it's complaints and it's reproaches*; the Parliament is about to be opened, *and the mouths of the orators who will demand against the war must be shut; the demands for new taxes must be justified; and to obtain these results, it is necessary to be able to advance, that the French Government refuses every reasonable proposition for peace.*" I am sorry that the language of the friends to Ministry and the enemies to mankind should be so much in unison.

As to the fact in which these parties are so well agreed, that the experiment ought to have been made for the satisfaction of this country,

(meaning the country of England) it were well to be wished, that persons of eminence would cease to make themselves representatives of the people of England without a letter of attorney, or any other act of procuration. In legal construction, the sense of the people of England is to be collected from the House of Commons; and, though I do not deny the possibility of an abuse of this trust as well as any other, yet I think, without the most weighty reasons, and in the most urgent exigencies, it is highly dangerous to suppose that the House speaks any thing contrary to the sense of the people, or that the representative is silent when the sense of the constituent strongly, decidedly, and upon long deliberation, speaks audibly upon any topic of moment. If there is a doubt, whether the House of Commons represents perfectly the whole Commons of Great Britain, (I think there is none) there can be no question but that the Lords and the Commons together represent the sense of the whole people to the Crown, and to the world. Thus it is, when we speak legally and constitutionally. In a great measure, it is equally true, when we speak prudentially; but I do not pretend to assert, that there are no other principles to guide discretion than those which are or can be fixed by some law, or some constitution; yet before the legally presumed sense of the people should  
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be superseded by a supposition of one more real (as in all cases, where a legal presumption is to be ascertained) some strong proofs ought to exist of a contrary disposition in the people at large, and some decisive indications of their desire upon this subject. There can be no question, that previously to a direct message from the Crown, neither House of Parliament did indicate any thing like a wish for such advances as we have made, or such negotiations as we have carried on. The Parliament has assented to Ministry; it is not Ministry that has obeyed the impulse of Parliament. The people at large have their organs through which they can speak to Parliament and to the Crown by a respectful petition, and, though not with absolute authority, yet with weight, they can instruct their Representatives. The freeholders and other electors in this kingdom have another, and a surer mode of expressing their sentiments concerning the conduct which is held by Members of Parliament. In the middle of these transactions, this last opportunity has been held out to them. In all these points of view, I positively assert, that the people have no where, and in no way, expressed their wish of throwing themselves and their Sovereign at the feet of a wicked and rancorous foe, to supplicate mercy, which, from the nature of that foe, and from the circumstances



stances of affairs, we had no sort of ground to expect. It is undoubtedly the business of Ministers very much to consult the inclinations of the people, but they ought to take great care that they do not receive that inclination from the few persons who may happen to approach them. The petty interests of such gentlemen, their low conceptions of things, their fears arising from the danger to which the very arduous and critical situation of publick affairs may expose their places; their apprehensions from the hazards to which the discontents of a few popular men at elections may expose their seats in Parliament; all these causes trouble and confuse the representations which they make to Ministers of the real temper of the nation. If Ministers, instead of following the great indications of the Constitution, proceed on such reports, they will take the whispers of a cabal for the voice of the people, and the counsels of imprudent timidity for the wisdom of a nation.

I well remember, that when the fortune of the war began, and it began pretty early, to turn, as it is common and natural, we were dejected by the losses that had been sustained, and with the doubtful issue of the contests that were foreseen. But not a word was uttered that supposed peace upon any proper terms, was in our power,

power, or therefore that it should be in our desire. As usual, with or without reason, we criticised the conduct of the war, and compared our fortunes with our measures. The mass of the nation went no further. For I suppose that you always understood me as speaking of that very preponderating part of the nation, which had always been equally adverse to the French principles, and to the general progress of their Revolution throughout Europe; considering the final success of their arms and the triumph of their principles as one and the same thing.

The first means that were used, by any one professing our principles, to change the minds of this party upon that subject, appeared in a small pamphlet circulated with considerable industry. It was commonly given to the noble person himself, who has passed judgment upon all hopes from negotiation, and justified our late abortive attempt only as an experiment made to satisfy the country; and yet that pamphlet led the way in endeavouring to dissatisfy that very country with the continuance of the war, and to raise in the people the most sanguine expectations from some such course of negotiation as has been fatally pursued. This leads me to suppose (and I am glad to have reason for supposing) that there was no foundation for attributing the performance  
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in question to that authour; but without mentioning his name in the title-page, it passed for his, and does still pass uncontradicted. It was entitled "Remarks on the apparent Circumstances of the War in the fourth Week of October, 1795."

This sanguine little king's-fisher (not prescient of the storm, as by his instinct he ought to be) appearing at that uncertain season, before the riggs of Old Michaelmas were yet well composed, and when the inclement storms of winter were approaching, began to flicker over the seas and was busy in building it's halcyon nest as if the angry ocean had been soothed by the genial breath of May. Very unfortunately this auspice was instantly followed by a speech from the Throne, in the very spirit and principles of that pamphlet,

I say nothing of the newspapers, which are undoubtedly in the interest, and which are supposed by some to be directly or indirectly under the influence of Ministers, and which, with less authority than the pamphlet I speak of, had indeed for some time before held a similar language, in direct contradiction to their more early tone: in so much, that I can speak it with a certain assurance, that very many who wished to Administration as well as you and I do, thought that in giving their opinion in favour of this peace, they



they followed the opinion of Ministry—they were conscious that they did not lead it. My inference therefore is this, that the negotiation, whatever it's merits may be, in the general principle and policy of undertaking it, is, what every political measure in general ought to be, the sole work of Administration; and that if it was an experiment to satisfy any body, it was to satisfy those, whom the Ministers were in the daily habit of condemning, and by whom they were daily condemned; I mean, the *Leaders of the Opposition in Parliament*. I am certain that the Ministers were then, and are now, invested with the fullest confidence of the major part of the nation, to pursue such measures of peace or war as the nature of things shall suggest as most adapted to the publick safety. It is in this light therefore as a measure which ought to have been avoided, and ought not to be repeated, that I take the liberty of discussing the merits of this system of Regicide Negotiations. It is not a matter of light experiment that leaves us where it found us. Peace or war are the great hinges upon which the very being of nations turns. Negotiations are the means of making peace or preventing war, and are therefore of more serious importance than almost any single event of war can possibly be.

At the very outset I do not hesitate to affirm, that this country in particular, and the publick law in general, have suffered more by this negotiation of experiment, than by all the battles together that we have lost from the commencement of this century to this time, when it touches so nearly to it's close. I therefore have the misfortune not to coincide in opinion with the great Statesman who set on foot a negotiation, as he said, "in spite of the constant opposition he had met with from France." He admits, "that the difficulty in this negotiation became most seriously increased indeed, by the situation in which we were placed, and the manner in which alone the enemy would admit of a negotiation." This situation so described, and so truly described, rendered our solicitation not only degrading, but from the very outset evidently hopeless.

I find it asserted, and even a merit taken for it, "that this country surmounted every difficulty of form and etiquette which the enemy had thrown in our way." An odd way of surmounting a difficulty by cowering under it! I find it asserted that an heroick resolution had been taken, and avowed in Parliament, previous to this negotiation, "that no consideration of etiquette should stand in the way of it."

Etiquette,

Etiquette, if I understand rightly the term, which in any extent is of modern usage, had it's original application to those ceremonial and formal observances practised at Courts, which had been established by long usage, in order to preserve the sovereign power from the rude intrusion of licentious familiarity, as well as to preserve Majesty itself from a disposition to consult it's ease at the expence of it's dignity. The term came afterwards to have a greater latitude, and to be employed to signify certain formal methods used in the transactions between sovereign States.

In the more limited as well as in the larger sense of the term, without knowing what the etiquette is, it is impossible to determine whether it is a vain and captious punctilio, or a form necessary to preserve decorum in character and order in business. I readily admit, that nothing tends to facilitate the issue of all public transactions more than a mutual disposition in the parties treating, to wave all ceremony. But the use of this temporary suspension of the recognised modes of respect consists in it's being mutual, and in the spirit of conciliation in which all ceremony is laid aside. On the contrary, when one of the parties to a treaty intrenches himself up to the chin in these ceremonies, and



will not, on his side, abate a single punctilio, and that all the concessions are upon one side only, the party so conceding does by this act place himself in a relation of inferiority, and thereby fundamentally subverts that equality which is of the very essence of all treaty.

After this formal act of degradation, it was but a matter of course, that gross insult should be offered to our Ambassador, and that he should tamely submit to it. He found himself provoked to complain of the atrocious libels against his publick character and his person, which appeared in a paper under the avowed patronage of that Government. The Regicide Directory, on this complaint, did not recognise the paper; and that was all. They did not punish, they did not dismiss, they did not even reprimand the writer. As to our Ambassador, this total want of reparation for the injury was passed by under the pretence of despising it.

In this, but too serious business, it is not possible here to avoid a simile. Contempt is not a thing to be despised. It may be borne with a calm and equal mind, but no man by lifting his head high can pretend that he does not perceive the scorns that are poured down upon him

him from above. All these sudden complaints of injury, and all these deliberate submissions to it, are the inevitable consequences of the situation in which we had placed ourselves; a situation wherein the insults were such as nature would not enable us to bear, and circumstances would not permit us to resent.

It was not long, however, after this contempt of contempt upon the part of our Ambassador (who by the way represented his Sovereign) that a new object was furnished for displaying sentiments of the same kind, though the case was infinitely aggravated. Not the Ambassador, but the King himself was libelled and insulted; libelled, not by a creature of the Directory, but by the Directory itself. At least so Lord Malmesbury understood it, and so he answered it in his note of the 12th December, 1796, in which he says, " With regard to the *offensive and injurious* insinuations which are contained in that " paper, and which are only calculated to throw " new obstacles in the way of that accommo- " dation, which the French Government pro- " fess to desire, **THE KING HAS DEEMED** " **IT FAR BENEATH HIS DIGNITY** to " permit an answer to be made to them on his " part, in any manner whatsoever."

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I am of opinion, that if his Majesty had kept aloof from that wash and off-scouring of every thing that is low and barbarous in the world, it might be well thought unworthy of his dignity to take notice of such scurrilities. They must be considered as much the natural expression of that kind of animal, as it is the expression of the feelings of a dog to bark; but when the King had been advised to recognise not only the monstrous composition as a Sovereign Power, but, in conduct, to admit something in it like a superiority, when the Bench of Regicide was made, at least, co-ordinate with his Throne, and raised upon a platform full as elevated, this treatment could not be passed by under the appearance of despising it. It would not, indeed, have been proper to keep up a war of the same kind, but an immediate, manly, and decided resentment ought to have been the consequence. We ought not to have waited for the disgraceful dismissal of our Ambassador. There are cases in which we may pretend to sleep: but the wittol rule has some sense in it, *Non omnibus dormio*. We might, however, have seemed ignorant of the affront; but what was the fact? Did we dissemble or pass it by in silence? When dignity is talked of, a language which I did not expect to hear in such a transaction, I must say what all the world must feel, that it

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was not for the King's dignity to notice this insult, and not to resent it. This mode of proceeding is formed on new ideas of the correspondence between Sovereign Powers.

This was far from the only ill effect of the policy of degradation. The state of inferiority in which we were placed in this vain attempt at treaty, drove us headlong from error into error, and led us to wander far away, not only from all the paths which have been beaten in the old course of political communication between mankind, but out of the ways even of the most common prudence. Against all rules, after we had met nothing but rebuffs in return to all our proposals, we made *two confidential communications* to those in whom we had *no* confidence, and who reposed no confidence in us. What was worse, we were fully aware of the madness of the step we were taking. Ambassadors are not sent to a hostile power, persevering in sentiments of hostility, to make candid, confidential, and amicable communications. Hitherto the world has considered it as the duty of an Ambassador in such a situation to be cautious, guarded, dexterous, and circumspect. It is true that mutual confidence and common interest, dispense with all rules, smooth the rugged way, remove every obstacle, and make all things plain and level. When, in the last century, *Temple* and

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*De Witt* negotiated the famous Triple Alliance, their candour, their freedom, and the most *confidential* disclosures, were the result of true policy. Accordingly, in spite of all the dilatory forms of the complex Government of the United Provinces, the treaty was concluded in three days. It did not take a much longer time to bring the same State (that of Holland) through a still more complicated transaction, that of the *Grand Alliance*. But in the present case, this unparalleled candour, this unpardonable want of reserve, produced what might have been expected from it, the most serious evils. It instructed the enemy in the whole plan of our demands and concessions. It made the most fatal discoveries.

And first, it induced us to lay down the basis of a treaty which itself had nothing to rest upon; it seems, we thought we had gained a great point in getting this basis admitted—that is, a basis of mutual compensation and exchange of conquests. If a disposition to peace, and with any reasonable assurance, had been previously indicated, such a plan of arrangement might with propriety and safety be proposed, because these arrangements were not, in effect, to make the basis, but a part of the superstructure of the fabrick of pacification. The order of things would thus be reversed. The mutual disposition to peace, would form the reasonable  
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base upon which the scheme of compensation, upon one side or the other, might be constructed. This truly fundamental base being once laid, all differences arising from the spirit of huckstering and barter might be easily adjusted. If the restoration of peace, with a view to the establishment of a fair balance of power in Europe, had been made the real basis of the treaty, the reciprocal value of the compensations could not be estimated according to their proportion to each other, but according to their proportionate relation to that end; to that great end the whole would be subservient. The effect of the treaty would be in a manner secured before the detail of particulars was begun, and for a plain reason, because the hostile spirit on both sides had been conjured down; but if in the full fury, and unappeased rancour of war, a little traffick is attempted, it is easy to divine what must be the consequence to those who endeavour to open that kind of petty commerce.

To illustrate what I have said, I go back no further than to the two last Treaties of Paris, and to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which preceded the first of these two Treaties of Paris by about fourteen or fifteen years. I do not mean here to criticise any of them. My opinions upon some particulars of the Treaty of  
L. Paris,



Paris in 1763, are published in a pamphlet,\* which your recollection will readily bring into your view. I recur to them only to shew that their basis had not been, and never could have been a mere dealing of truck and barter, but that the parties being willing, from common fatigue or common suffering, to put an end to a war, the first object of which had either been obtained or despaired of, the lesser objects were not thought worth the price of further contest. The parties understanding one another, so much was given away without considering from whose budget it came, not as the value of the objects, but as the value of peace to the parties might require. At the last treaty of Paris the subjugation of America being despaired of on the part of Great Britain, and the independence of America being looked upon as secure upon the part of France, the main cause of the war was removed; and then the conquests which France had made upon us (for we had made none of importance upon her) were surrendered with sufficient facility. Peace was restored as peace. In America the parties stood as they were possessed. A limit was to be settled, but settled as a limit to secure that peace, and not at all on a system of equivalents, for which, as we then stood with the United States, there were little or no materials.

\* Observations on a late State of the Nation.

At the preceding treaty of Paris, I mean that of 1763, there was nothing at all on which to fix a basis of compensation from reciprocal cession of conquests. They were all on one side. The question with us was not what we were to receive, and on what consideration, but what we were to keep for indemnity, or to cede for peace. Accordingly no place being left for barter, sacrifices were made on our side to peace; and we surrendered to the French their most valuable possessions in the West Indies without any equivalent. The rest of Europe fell soon after into it's antient order; and the German war ended exactly where it had begun.

The treaty of Aix la Chapelle was built upon a similar basis. All the conquests in Europe had been made by France. She had subdued the Austrian Netherlands, and broken open the gates of Holland. We had taken nothing in the West Indies, and Cape Breton was a trifling business indeed. France gave up all for peace. The allies had given up all that was ceded at Utrecht. Louis the Fourteenth made all, or nearly all, the cessions at Ryswick, and at Nimeguen. In all those treaties, and in all the preceding, as well as in the others which intervened, the question never had been that of barter. The balance of power had been ever assumed as the known common law of Europe at

all times, and by all powers : the question had only been (as it must happen) on the more or less inclination of that balance.

This general balance was regarded in four principal points of view :—the GREAT MIDDLE BALANCE, which comprehended Great Britain, France, and Spain; the BALANCE OF THE NORTH; the BALANCE, external and internal, of GERMANY; and the BALANCE OF ITALY. In all those systems of balance, England was the power to whose custody it was thought it might be most safely committed.

France, as she happened to stand, secured the balance, or endangered it. Without question she had been long the security for the balance of Germany, and under her auspices the system, if not formed, had been at least perfected. She was so in some measure with regard to Italy, more than occasionally. She had a clear interest in the balance of the North, and had endeavoured to preserve it. But when we began to treat with the present France, or more properly to prostrate ourselves to her, and to try if we should be admitted to ransom our allies, upon a system of mutual concession and compensation, we had not one of the usual facilities. For first, we had not the smallest indication of a desire for peace on the part of the enemy; but rather



rather the direct contrary. Men do not make sacrifices to obtain what they do not desire: and as for the balance of power, it was so far from being admitted by France either on the general system, or with regard to the particular systems that I have mentioned, that in the whole body of their authorized or encouraged reports and discussions upon the theory of the diplomatic system, they constantly rejected the very idea of the balance of power, and treated it as the true cause of all the wars and calamities that had afflicted Europe: and their practice was correspondent to the dogmatick positions they had laid down. The Empire and the Papacy it was their great object to destroy, and this now openly avowed and stedfastly acted upon, might have been discerned with very little acuteness of sight, from the very first dawns of the Revolution, to be the main drift of their policy. For they professed a resolution to destroy every thing which can hold States together by the tie of opinion.

Exploding, therefore, all sorts of balances, they avow their design to erect themselves into a new description of Empire, which is not grounded on any balance, but forms a sort of impious hierarchy, of which France is to be the head and the guardian. The law of this their Empire is any thing rather than the publick

lick law of Europe, the antient conventions of it's several States, or the antient opinions which assign to them superiority or pre-eminence of any sort, or any other kind of connexion in virtue of antient relations. They permit, and that is all, the temporary existence of some of the old communities; but whilst they give to these tolerated States this temporary respite in order to secure them in a condition of real dependance on themselves, they invest them on every side by a body of Republicks, formed on the model, and dependent ostensibly, as well as substantially, on the will, of the mother Republick, to which they owe their origin. These are to be so many garisons to check and controul the States, which are to be permitted to remain on the old model, until they are ripe for a change. It is in this manner that France, on her new system, means to form an universal empire, by producing an universal revolution. By this means, forming a new code of communities according to what she calls the natural rights of man and of States, she pretends to secure eternal peace to the world, guaranteed by her generosity and justice, which are to grow with the extent of her power. To talk of the balance of power to the governors of such a country, was a jargon which they could not understand even through an interpreter. Before men can transact any affair, they must have a common language to speak, and some  
common

common recognised principles on which they can argue, otherwise all is cross-purpose and confusion. It was, therefore, an essential preliminary to the whole proceeding, to fix, whether the balance of power, the liberties and laws of the Empire, and the treaties of different belligerent powers in past times, when they put an end to hostilities, were to be considered as the basis of the present negotiation.

The whole of the enemy's plan was known when Lord Malmesbury was sent with his scrap of equivalents to Paris. Yet, in this unfortunate attempt at negotiation, instead of fixing these points, and assuming the balance of power and the peace of Europe as the basis to which all cessions on all sides were to be subservient, our solicitor for peace was directed to reverse that order. He was directed to make mutual concessions, on a mere comparison of their marketable value, the base of treaty. The balance of power was to be thrown in as an inducement, and a sort of make-weight, to supply the manifest deficiency which must stare him and the world in the face, between those objects which he was to require the enemy to surrender, and those which he had to offer as a fair equivalent.

To give any force to this inducement, and to make it answer even the secondary purpose of  
equalizing



equalizing equivalents having in themselves no natural proportionate value, it supposed, that the enemy, contrary to the most notorious fact, did admit this balance of power to be of some value, great or small; whereas it is plain, that in the enemy's estimate of things, the consideration of the balance of power, as we have said before, was so far from going in diminution of the value of what the Directory was desired to surrender, or of giving an additional price to our objects offered in exchange, that the hope of the utter destruction of that balance became, a new motive to the junto of Regicides for preserving, as a means for realizing that hope, what we wished them to abandon.

Thus stood the basis of the treaty on laying the first stone of the foundation. At the very best, upon our side, the question stood upon a mere naked bargain and sale. Unthinking people here triumphed when they thought they had obtained it, whereas when obtained as a basis of a treaty, it was just the worst we could possibly have chosen. As to our offer to cede a most unprofitable, and, indeed, beggarly chargeable counting-house or two in the East-Indies, we ought not to presume that they would consider this as any thing else than a mockery. As to any thing of real value, we had nothing under

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Heaven to offer (for which we were not ourselves in a very dubious struggle) except the Island of Martinico only. When this object was to be weighed against the directorial conquests, merely as an object of a value at market, the principle of barter became perfectly ridiculous; a single quarter in the single city of Amsterdam, was worth ten Martinicos; and would have sold for many more years purchase in any market overt in Europe. How was this gross and glaring defect in the objects of exchange to be supplied?—It was to be made up by argument. And what was that argument?—The extreme utility of possessions in the West-Indies to the augmentation of the naval power of France. A very curious topick of argument to be proposed and insisted on by an Ambassador of Great Britain. It is directly and plainly this—“Come, we know that of all things you wish a naval power, and it is natural you should, who wish to destroy the very sources of the British greatness, to overpower our marine, to destroy our commerce, to eradicate our foreign influence, and to lay us open to an invasion, which, at one stroke, may complete our servitude and ruin, and expunge us from among the nations of the earth. Here I have it in my budget, the infallible arcanum for that purpose. You are but novices in the art of naval resources. Let you have the West-Indies

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back, and your maritime preponderance is secured, for which you would do well to be moderate in your demands upon the Austrian Netherlands.<sup>33</sup>

Under any circumstances, this is a most extraordinary topick of argument; but it is rendered by much the more unaccountable, when we are told, that if the war has been diverted from the great object of establishing society and good order in Europe by destroying the usurpation in France; this diversion was made to increase the naval resources and power of Great-Britain, and to lower, if not annihilate, those of the marine of France. I leave all this to the very serious reflexion of every Englishman.

This basis was no sooner admitted, than the rejection of a treaty upon that sole foundation was a thing of course. The enemy did not think it worthy of a discussion, as in truth it was not; and immediately, as usual, they began, in the most opprobrious, and most insolent manner, to question our sincerity and good faith. Whereas, in truth, there was no one symptom wanting of openness and fair dealing. What could be more fair than to lay open to an enemy all that you wished to obtain, and the price you meant to pay for it, and to desire him to imitate your ingenuous



genuous proceeding, and in the same manner to open his honest heart to you. Here was no want of fair dealing, but there was too evidently a fault of another kind; there was much weakness—there was an eager and impotent desire of associating with this unsocial power, and of attempting the connexion by any means, however manifestly feeble and ineffectual. The event was committed to chance; that is, to such a manifestation of the desire of France for peace, as would induce the Directory to forget the advantages they had in the system of barter. Accordingly the general desire for such a peace was triumphantly reported from the moment that Lord Malmesbury had set his foot on shore at Calais.

It has been said, that the Directory was compelled against it's will to accept the basis of barter (as if it that had tended to accelerate the work of pacification!) by the voice of all France. Had this been the case, the Directors would have continued to listen to that voice to which it seems they were so obedient: they would have proceeded with the negotiation upon that basis. But the fact is, that they instantly broke up the negotiation, as soon as they had obliged our Ambassador to violate all the principles of treaty, and weakly, rashly, and unguardedly, to expose, without any counter-proposition, the whole

of our project with regard to ourselves and our allies, and without holding out the smallest hope that they would admit the smallest part of our pretensions.

When they had thus drawn from us all that they could draw out, they expelled Lord Malmesbury, and they appealed for the propriety of their conduct, to that very France which, we thought proper to suppose, had driven them to this fine concession; and I do not find, that in either division of the family of thieves, the younger branch, or the elder, or in any other body whatsoever, there was any indignation excited, or any tumult raised; or any thing like the virulence of opposition which was shewn to the King's Ministers here, on account of that transaction.

Notwithstanding all this, it seems a hope is still entertained, that the Directory will have that tenderness for the carcase of their country, by whose very distemper, and on whose festering wounds, like vermin, they are fed; that these pious patriots will of themselves come into a more moderate and reasonable way of thinking and acting. In the name of wonder, what has inspired our Ministry with this hope any more than with their former expectations?

Do these hopes only arise from continual disappointment? Do they grow out of the usual grounds of despair? What is there to encourage them, in the conduct, or even in the declarations of the Ruling Powers in France, from the first formation of their mischievous Republick to the hour in which I write? Is not the Directory composed of the same junto? Are they not the identical men, who, from the base and sordid vices which belonged to their original place and situation, aspired to the dignity of crimes; and from the dirtiest, lowest, most fraudulent, and most knavish of chicaners, ascended in the scale of robbery, sacrilege, and assassination in all its forms, till at last they had imbrued their impious hands in the blood of their Sovereign? Is it from these men that we are to hope for this paternal tenderness to their country, and this sacred regard for the peace and happiness of all nations?

But it seems there is still another lurking hope, akin to that which duped us so egregiously before, when our delightful basis was accepted: we still flatter ourselves that the publick voice of France will compel this Directory to more moderation. Whence does this hope arise? What publick voice is there in France? There are, indeed, some writers, who, since this monster of  
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a Directory has obtained a great regular military force to guard them, are indulged in a sufficient liberty of writing, and some of them write well undoubtedly. But the world knows that in France there is no publick, that the country is composed but of two descriptions; audacious tyrants and trembling slaves. The contests between the tyrants is the only vital principle that can be discerned in France. The only thing which there appears like spirit, is amongst their late associates, and fastest friends of the Directory, the more furious and untameable part of the Jacobins. This discontented member of the faction does almost balance the reigning divisions; and it threatens every moment to predominate. For the present, however, the dread of their fury forms some sort of security to their fellows, who now exercise a more regular, and therefore a somewhat less ferocious tyranny. Most of the slaves chuse a quiet, however reluctant, submission to those who are somewhat satiated with blood, and who, like wolves, are a little more tame from being a little less hungry, in preference to an irruption of the famished devourers, who are prowling and howling about the fold.

This circumstance assures some degree of permanence to the power of those, whom we know  
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to be permanently our rancourous and implacable enemies. But to those very enemies, who have sworn our destruction, we have ourselves given a further and far better security by rendering the cause of the Royalists desperate. Those brave and virtuous, but unfortunate adherents to the ancient constitution of their country, after the miserable slaughters which have been made in that body, after all their losses by emigration, are still numerous, but unable to exert themselves against the force of the usurpation, evidently countenanced and upheld by those very Princes who had called them to arm for the support of the legal Monarchy. Where then, after chasing these fleeting hopes of ours from point to point of the political horizon, are they at last really found? Not where, under Providence, the hopes of Englishmen used to be placed, in our own courage and in our own virtues, but in the moderation and virtue of the most atrocious monsters that have ever disgraced and plagued mankind.

The only excuse to be made for all our mendicant diplomacy is the same as in the case of all other mendicancy;—namely, that it has been founded on absolute necessity. This deserves consideration. Necessity, as it has no law, so it has no shame; but moral necessity is not like metaphysical,

metaphysical, or even physical. In that category, it is a word of loose signification, and conveys different ideas to different minds. To the low-minded, the slightest necessity becomes an invincible necessity. "The slothful man saith, "There is a lion in the way, and I shall be devoured in the streets." But when the necessity pleaded is not in the nature of things, but in the vices of him who alledges it, the whining tones of common-place beggarly rhetoric, produce nothing but indignation; because they indicate a desire of keeping up a dishonourable existence, without utility to others, and without dignity to itself; because they aim at obtaining the dues of labour without industry; and by frauds would draw from the compassion of others, what men ought to owe to their own spirit and their own exertions.

I am thoroughly satisfied that if we degrade ourselves, it is the degradation which will subject us to the yoke of necessity, and, not that it is necessity which has brought on our degradation. In this same chaos, where light and darkness are struggling together, the open subscription of last year, with all its circumstances, must have given us no little glimmering of hope; not (as I have heard, it was vainly discoursed) that the loan could prove a crutch to a lame negotiation



tiation abroad; and that the whiff and wind of it must at once have disposed the enemies of all tranquillity to a desire for peace. Judging on the face of facts, if on them it had any effect at all, it had the direct contrary effect; for very soon after the loan became publick at Paris, the negotiation ended, and our Ambaffador was ignominiously expelled. My view of this was different: I liked the loan, not from the influence which it might have on the enemy, but on account of the temper which it indicated in our own people. This alone is a consideration of any importance; because all calculation, formed upon a supposed relation of the habitudes of others to our own, under the present circumstances, is weak and fallacious. The adversary must be judged, not by what we are, or by what we wish him to be, but by what we must know he actually is; unless we choose to shut our eyes and our ears to the uniform tenour of all his discourses, and to his uniform course in all his actions. We may be deluded; but we cannot pretend that we have been disappointed. The old rule of, *Ne te quæsieris extra*, is a precept as available in policy as it is in morals. Let us leave off speculating upon the disposition and the wants of the enemy. Let us descend into our own bosoms; let us ask ourselves what are our duties, and what are our means of discharging them. In what

heart are you at home? How far may an English Minister confide in the affections, in the confidence, in the force of an English people? What does he find us when he puts us to the proof of what English interest and English honour demand? It is, as furnishing an answer to these questions that I consider the circumstances of the loan. The effect on the enemy is not in what he may speculate on our resources, but in what he shall feel from our arms.

The circumstances of the loan have proved beyond a doubt three capital points, which, if they are properly used, may be advantageous to the future liberty and happiness of mankind. In the first place, the loan demonstrates, in regard to instrumental resources, the competency of this kingdom to the assertion of the common cause, and to the maintenance and superintendence of that, which it is its duty, and its glory to hold, and to watch over—the balance of power throughout the Christian World. Secondly, it brings to light what, under the most discouraging appearances, I always reckoned on; that with its ancient physical force, not only unimpaired, but augmented, its ancient spirit is still alive in the British nation. It proves, that for their application there is a spirit equal to the resources, for its energy above them. It  
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proves that there exists, though not always visible, a spirit which never fails to come forth whenever it is ritually invoked ; a spirit which will give no equivocal response, but such as will hearten the timidity, and fix the irresolution of hesitating prudence ; a spirit which will be ready to perform all the tasks that shall be imposed upon it by publick honour. Thirdly, the loan displays an abundant confidence in his Majesty's Government, as administered by his present servants, in the prosecution of a war which the people consider, not as a war made on the suggestion of Ministers, and to answer the purposes of the ambition or pride of statesmen, but as a war of their own, and in defence of that very property which they expend for it's support ; a war for that order of things, from which every thing valuable that they possess is derived, and in which order alone it can possibly be maintained.

I hear in derogation of the value of the fact, from which I draw inferences so favourable to the spirit of the people, and to it's just expectation from Ministers, that the eighteen million loan is to be considered in no other light, than as taking advantage of a very lucrative bargain held out to the subscribers. I do not in truth believe it. All the circumstances which attend-



ed the subscription strongly spoke a different language. Be it, however, as these detractors say. This with me derogates little, or rather nothing at all, from the political value and importance of the fact. I should be very sorry if the transaction was not such a bargain, otherwise it would not have been a fair one. A corrupt and improvident loan, like every thing else corrupt or prodigal, cannot be too much condemned : but there is a short-sighted parsimony still more fatal than an unforeseeing expence. The value of money must be judged like every thing else from it's rate at market. To force that market, or any market, is of all things the most dangerous. For a small temporary benefit, the spring of all public credit might be relaxed for ever. The monied men have a right to look to advantage in the investment of their property. To advance their money, they risk it ; and the risk is to be included in the price. If they were to incur a loss, that loss would amount to a tax on that peculiar species of property. In effect, it would be the most unjust and impolitick of all things, unequal taxation. It would throw upon one description of persons in the community, that burthen which ought by fair and equitable distribution to rest upon the whole. None on account of their dignity should be exempt ; none (preserving due proportion)

proportion) on account of the scantiness of their means. The moment a man is exempted from the maintenance of the community, he is in a sort separated from it. He loses the place of a citizen.

So it is in all *taxation*; but in a *bargain*, when terms of loss are looked for by the borrower from the lender, compulsion, or what virtually is compulsion, introduces itself into the place of treaty. When compulsion may be at all used by a State in borrowing, the occasion must determine. But the compulsion ought to be known, and well defined, and well distinguished: for otherwise treaty only weakens the energy of compulsion, while compulsion destroys the freedom of a bargain. The advantage of both is lost by the confusion of things in their nature utterly unfociable. It would be to introduce compulsion into that in which freedom and existence are the same; I mean credit. The moment that shame, or fear, or force, are directly or indirectly applied to a loan, credit perishes.

There must be some impulse besides public spirit, to put private interest into motion along with it. Monied men ought to be allowed to set a value on their money; if they did not, there

there could be no monied men. This desire of accumulation, is a principle without which the means of their service to the State could not exist. The love of lucre, though sometimes carried to a ridiculous, sometimes to a vicious excess, is the grand cause of prosperity to all States. In this natural, this reasonable, this powerful, this prolifick principle, it is for the satyrist to expose the ridiculous ; it is for the moralist to censure the vicious ; it is for the sympathetick heart to reprobate the hard and cruel ; it is for the Judge to animadvert on the fraud, the extortion, and the oppression : but it is for the Statesman to employ it as he finds it, with all it's concomitant excellencies, with all it's imperfections on it's head. It is his part, in this case, as it is in all other cases, where he is to make use of the general energies of nature, to take them as he finds them.

After all, it is a great mistake to imagine, as too commonly, almost indeed generally, it is imagined, that the publick borrower and the private lender, are two adverse parties with different and contending interests : and that what is given to the one, is wholly taken from the other. Constituted as our system of finance and taxation is, the interests of the contracting parties cannot well be separated, whatever they may reciprocally,



reciprocally intend. He who is the hard lender of to-day, to-morrow is the generous contributor to his own payment. For example, the last loan is raised on publick taxes, which are designed to produce annually two millions sterling. At first view, this is an annuity of two millions dead charge upon the publick in favour of certain monied men: but inspect the thing more nearly, follow the stream in it's meanders; and you will find that there is a good deal of fallacy in this state of things.

I take it, that whoever considers any man's expenditure of his income, old or new (I speak of certain classes in life) will find a full third of it to go in taxes, direct or indirect. If so, this new-created income of two millions will probably furnish 665,000*l*. (I avoid broken numbers) towards the payment of it's own interest, or to the sinking of it's own capital. So it is with the whole of the publick debt. Suppose it any given sum, it is a fallacious estimate of the affairs of a nation to consider it as a mere burthen; to a degree it is so without question, but not wholly so, nor any thing like it. If the income from the interest be spent, the above proportion returns again into the publick stock: insomuch, that taking the interest of the whole debt to be twelve million, three hundred thousand

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land pound, (it is something more) not less than a sum of four million one hundred thousand pound comes back again to the publick through the channel of imposition. If the whole, or any part, of that income be saved, so much new capital is generated; the infallible operation of which is to lower the value of money, and consequently to conduce towards the improvement of publick credit.

I take the expenditure of the *capitalist*, not the value of the capital, as my standard; because it is the standard upon which amongst us, property as an object of taxation, is rated. In this country, land and offices only excepted, we raise no faculty tax. We preserve the faculty from the expence. Our taxes, for the far greater portion, fly over the heads of the lowest classes. They escape too who, with better ability, voluntarily subject themselves to the harsh discipline of a rigid necessity. With us, labour and frugality, the parents of riches, are spread, and wisely too. The moment men cease to augment the common stock, the moment they no longer enrich it by their industry or their self-denial, their luxury and even their ease are obliged to pay contribution to the publick; not because they are vicious principles, but because they are unproductive. If, in fact, the interest paid by  
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the publick had not thus revolved again into it's own fund; if this secretion had not again been absorbed into the mass of blood, it would have been impossible for the nation to have existed to this time under such a debt. But under the debt it does exist and flourish; and this flourishing state of existence in no small degree is owing to the contribution from the debt to the payment. Whatever, therefore, is taken from that capital by too close a bargain, is but a delusive advantage, it is so much lost to the publick in another way. This matter cannot on the one side or the other, be metaphysically pursued to the extreme, but it is a consideration of which, in all discussions of this kind, we ought never wholly to lose sight.

It is never, therefore, wise to quarrel with the interested views of men, whilst they are combined with the publick interest and promote it: it is our business to tie the knot, if possible, closer. Resources that are derived from extraordinary virtues, as such virtues are rare, so they must be unproductive. It is a good thing for a monied man to pledge his property on the welfare of his country; he shews that he places his treasure where his heart is; and, revolving in this circle, we know that "wherever a man's treasure is, there his heart will be also." For



these reasons and on these principles, I have been sorry to see the attempts which have been made, with more good meaning than foresight and consideration, towards raising the annual interest of this loan by private contributions. Wherever a regular revenue is established, there voluntary contribution can answer no purpose, but to disorder and disturb it in it's course. To recur to such aids is, for so much to dissolve the community, and to return to a state of unconnected nature. And even if such a supply should be productive, in a degree commensurate to it's object, it must also be productive of much vexation, and much oppression. Either the citizens, by the proposed duties, pay their proportion according to some rate made by publick authority, or they do not. If the law be well made, and the contributions founded on just proportions, every thing super-added by something that is not as regular as law, and as uniform in it's operation, will become more or less out of proportion. If, on the contrary, the law be not made upon proper calculation, it is a disgrace to the publick wisdom, which fails in skill to assess the citizen in just measure, and according to his means. But the hand of authority is not always the most heavy hand. It is obvious, that men may be oppressed by many ways, besides those which  
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take their course from the supreme power of the State. Suppose the payment to be wholly discretionary. Whatever has it's origin in caprice, is sure not to improve in it's progress, nor to end in reason. It is impossible for each private individual to have any measure conformable to the particular condition of each of his fellow-citizens, or to the general exigencies of his country. 'Tis a random shot at best.

When men proceed in this irregular mode, the first contributor is apt to grow peevish with his neighbours. He is but too well disposed to measure their means by his own envy, and not by the real state of their fortunes, which he can rarely know, and which it may in them be an act of the grossest imprudence to reveal. Hence the odium and lassitude, with which people will look upon a provision for the publick, which is bought by discord at the expence of social quiet. Hence the bitter heart-burnings, and the war of tongues which is so often the prelude to other wars. Nor is it every contribution, called voluntary, which is according to the free will of the giver. A false shame, or a false glory, against his feelings, and his judgment, may tax an individual to the detriment of his family, and in wrong of his credi-

tors. A pretence of publick spirit may disable him from the performance of his private duties. It may disable him even from paying the legitimate contributions which he is to furnish according to the prescript of law; but what is the most dangerous of all is, that malignant disposition to which this mode of contribution evidently tends, and which at length leaves the comparatively indigent, to judge of the wealth, and to prescribe to the opulent, or those whom they conceive to be such, the use they are to make of their fortunes. From thence it is but one step to the subversion of all property.

Far, very far am I from supposing that such things enter into the purposes of those excellent persons whose zeal has led them to this kind of measure; but the measure itself will lead them beyond their intention, and what is begun with the best designs, bad men will perversely improve to the worst of their purposes. An ill-founded plausibility in great affairs is a real evil. In France we have seen the wickedest and most foolish of men, the Constitution-mongers of 1789, pursuing this very course, and ending in this very event. These projectors of deception set on foot two modes of voluntary contribution to the state. The first, they called patriotic gifts. These, for the greater part were not  
more



more ridiculous in the mode, than contemptible in the project. The other, which they called the patriotick contribution, was expected to amount to a fourth of the fortunes of individuals, but at their own will and on their own estimate; but this contribution threatening to fall infinitely short of their hopes, they soon made it compulsory, both in the rate and in the levy, beginning in fraud and ending, as all the frauds of power end, in plain violence. All these devices to produce an involuntary will, were under the pretext of relieving the more indigent classes, but the principle of voluntary contribution, however delusive, being once established, these lower classes first, and then all classes, were encouraged to throw off the regular methodical payments to the State as so many badges of slavery. Thus all regular revenue failing, these impostors raising the superstructure on the same cheats with which they had laid the foundation of their greatness, and not content with a portion of the possessions of the rich, confiscated the whole, and to prevent them from reclaiming their rights, murdered the proprietors. The whole of the process has passed before our eyes, and been conducted indeed with a greater degree of rapidity than could be expected.

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My opinion then is, that publick contributions ought only to be raised by the publick will. By the judicious form of our constitution, the publick contribution is in it's name and substance a grant. In it's origin it is truly voluntary; not voluntary, according to the irregular, unsteady, capricious will of individuals, but according to the will and wisdom of the whole popular mass, in the only way in which will and wisdom can go together. This voluntary grant obtaining in it's progress the force of a law, a general necessity which takes away all merit, and consequently all jealousy from individuals, compresses, equalizes, and satisfies the whole; suffering no man to judge of his neighbour, or to arrogate any thing to himself. If their will complies with their obligation, the great end is answered in the happiest mode; if the will resists the burthen, every one loses a great part of his own will as a common lot. After all, perhaps contributions raised by a charge on luxury, or that degree of convenience which approaches so near as to be confounded with luxury, is the only mode of contribution which may be with truth termed voluntary.

I might rest here, and take the loan I speak of as leading to a solution of that question, which

which I proposed in my first letter: "Whether the inability of the country to prosecute the war, did necessitate a submission to the indignities and the calamities of a Peace with the Regicide Power." But give me leave to pursue this point a little further.

I know that it has been a cry usual on this occasion, as it has been upon occasions where such a cry could have less apparent justification, that great distress and misery have been the consequence of this war, by the burthens brought and laid upon the people. But to know where the burthen really lies, and where it presses, we must divide the people. As to the common people, their stock is in their persons and in their earnings. I deny that the stock of their persons is diminished in a greater proportion than the common sources of populousness abundantly fill up; I mean constant employment; proportioned pay according to the produce of the soil, and where the soil fails, according to the operation of the general capital; plentiful nourishment to vigorous labour; comfortable provision to decrepid age, to orphan infancy, and to accidental malady. I say nothing to the policy of the provision for the poor, in all the variety of faces under which it presents itself. This is the matter of another enquiry. I only just speak of it as a fact



fact, taken with others, to support me in my denial that hitherto any one of the ordinary sources of the increase of mankind is dried up by this war. I affirm, what I can well prove, that the waste has been less than the supply. To say that in war no man must be killed, is to say that there ought to be no war. This they may say, who wish to talk idly, and who would display their humanity at the expence of their honesty, or their understanding. If more lives are lost in this war than necessity requires, they are lost by misconduct or mistake, but if the hostility be just, the error is to be corrected: the war is not to be abandoned.

That the stock of the common people, in numbers is not lessened, any more than the causes are impaired, is manifest, without being at the pains of an actual numeration. An improved and improving agriculture, which implies a great augmentation of labour, has not yet found itself at a stand, no, not for a single moment, for want of the necessary hands, either in the settled progress of husbandry, or in the occasional pressure of harvests. I have even reason to believe that there has been a much smaller importation, or the demand of it, from a neighbouring kingdom than in former times, when agriculture was more limited in it's extent and  
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it's means, and when the time was a season of profound peace. On the contrary, the prolifick fertility of country life has poured it's superfluity of population into the canals, and into other publick works which of late years have been undertaken to so amazing an extent, and which have not only not been discontinued, but beyond all expectation pushed on with redoubled vigour, in a war that calls for so many of our men, and so much of our riches. An increasing capital calls for labour: and an increasing population answers to the call. Our manufactures augmented both for the supply of foreign and domestick consumption, reproducing with the means of life, the multitudes which they use and waste, (and which many of them devour much more surely and much more largely than the war) have always found the laborious hand ready for the liberal pay. That the price of the soldier is highly raised is true. In part this rise may be owing to some measures not so well considered in the beginning of this war, but the grand cause has been the reluctance of that class of people from whom the soldiery is taken, to enter into a military life, not that but once entered into, it has it's conveniences, and even it's pleasures. I have seldom known a soldier who, at the intercession of his friends, and at their no small

charge, had been redeemed from that discipline, that in a short time, was not eager to return to it again. But the true reason is the abundant occupation, and the augmented stipend found in towns, and villages, and farms, which leaves a smaller number of persons to be disposed of. The price of men for new and untried ways of life, must bear a proportion to the profits of that mode of existence from whence they are to be bought.

So far as to the stock of the common people, as it consists in their persons. As to the other part, which consists in their earnings, I have to say, that the rates of wages are very greatly augmented almost through the kingdom. In the parish where I live, it has been raised from seven to nine shillings in the week for the same labourer, performing the same task, and no greater. Except something in the malt taxes, and the duties upon sugars, I do not know any one tax imposed for very many years past which affects the labourer in any degree whatsoever; while on the other hand, the tax upon houses not having more than seven windows (that is, upon cottages) was repealed the very year before the commencement of the present war. On the whole, I am satisfied, that the humblest class, and that class which touches the most  
nearly



nearly on the lowest, out of which it is continually emerging, and to which it is continually falling, receives far more from publick impositions than it pays. That class receives two million sterling annually from the classes above it. It pays to no such amount towards any publick contribution.

I hope it is not necessary for me to take notice of that language, so ill suited to the persons to whom it has been attributed, and so unbecoming the place in which it is said to have been uttered, concerning the present war as the cause of the high price of provisions during the greater part of the year 1796. I presume it is only to be ascribed to the intolerable licence with which the newspapers break not only the rules of decorum in real life, but even the dramattick decorum, when they personate great men, and, like bad poets, make the heroes of the piece talk more like us Grub-street scribblers, than in a style consonant to persons of gravity and importance in the State. It was easy to demonstrate the cause, and the sole cause, of that rise in the grand article and first necessary of life. It would appear that it had no more connexion with the war, than the moderate price to which all sorts of grain were reduced, soon after the return of Lord Malmesbury, had with the state of po-

ticks and the fate of his Lordship's treaty. I have quite as good reason (that is, no reason at all) to attribute this abundance to the longer continuance of the war, as the gentlemen who personate leading Members of Parliament, have had for giving the enhanced price to that war, at a more early period of it's duration. Oh, the folly of us poor creatures, who, in the midst of our distresses, or our escapes, are ready to claw or caress one another, upon matters that so seldom depend on our wisdom or our weakness, on our good or evil conduct towards each other!

An untimely shower, or an unseasonable drought; a frost too long continued, or too suddenly broken up, with rain and tempest; the blight of the spring, or the smut of the harvest; will do more to cause the distress of the belly, than all the contrivances of all Statesmen can do to relieve it. Let Government protect and encourage industry, secure property, repress violence, and discountenance fraud, it is all that they have to do. In other respects, the less they meddle in these affairs the better; the rest is in the hands of our Master and theirs. We are in a constitution of things wherein—" *Modo sol nimius, modo corripit imber.*" But I will push this matter no further. As I have said a good deal upon it at various times during my publick

publick service, and have lately written something on it, which may yet see the light, I shall content myself now with observing, that the vigorous and laborious class of life has lately got from the *bon ton* of the humanity of this day, the name of the "*labouring poor*." We have heard many plans for the relief of the "*Labouring Poor*." This puling jargon is not as innocent as it is foolish. In meddling with great affairs, weakness is never innoxious. Hitherto the name of Poor (in the sense in which it is used to excite compassion) has not been used for those who can, but for those who cannot labour—for the sick and infirm; for orphan infancy; for languishing and decrepid age: but when we affect to pity as poor, those who must labour or the world cannot exist, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. It is the common doom of man that he must eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, that is, by the sweat of his body, or the sweat of his mind. If this toil was inflicted as a curse, it is as might be expected from the curses of the Father of all Blessings—it is tempered with many alleviations, many comforts. Every attempt to fly from it, and to refuse the very terms of our existence, becomes much more truly a curse, and heavier pains and penalties fall upon those who would elude the tasks which are put  
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upon them by the great Master Workman of the World, who in his dealings with his creatures sympathizes with their weakness, and speaking of a creation wrought by mere will out of nothing, speaks of six days of *labour* and one of *rest*. I do not call a healthy young man, chearful in his mind, and vigorous in his arms, I cannot call such a man, *poor*; I cannot pity my kind as a kind, merely because they are men. This affected pity, only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition, and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found, in something else than their own industry, and frugality, and sobriety. Whatever may be the intention (which, because I do not know, I cannot dispute) of those who would discontent mankind by this strange pity, they act towards us in the consequences, as if they were our worst enemies.

In turning our view from the lower to the higher classes, it will not be necessary for me to shew at any length that the stock of the latter, as it consists in their numbers, has not yet suffered any material diminution. I have not seen, or heard it asserted: I have no reason to believe it: there is no want of officers, that I have ever understood, for the new ships which we commission, or the new regiments which we raise.

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In the nature of things it is not with their persons, that the higher classes principally pay their contingent to the demands of war. There is another, and not less important, part which rests with almost exclusive weight upon them. They furnish the means,

“ ————— How war may best upheld,  
 “ Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,  
 “ In all her equipage.”

Not that they are exempt from contributing also by their personal service in the fleets and armies of their country. They do contribute, and in their full and fair proportion, according to the relative proportion of their numbers in the community. They contribute all the mind that actuates the whole machine. The fortitude required of them, is very different from the unthinking alacrity of the common soldier, or common sailor, in the face of danger and death; it is not a passion, it is not an impulse, it is not a sentiment; it is a cool, steady, deliberate principle, always present, always equable; having no connexion with anger; tempering honour with prudence; incited, invigorated, and sustained by a generous love of fame; informed, moderated and directed by an enlarged knowledge of it's own great publick ends; flowing in one blended stream from the opposite sources of the heart and the head; carrying in itself it's own commission, and proving it's title to every  
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other command, by the first and most difficult command, that of the bosom in which it resides: it is a fortitude, which unites with the courage of the field the more exalted and refined courage of the council; which knows, as well to retreat as to advance; which can conquer as well by delay, as by the rapidity of a march, or the impetuosity of an attack; which can be, with Fabius, the black cloud that lowers on the tops of the mountains, or with Scipio, the thunderbolt of war; which undismayed by false shame, can patiently endure the severest trial that a gallant spirit can undergo, in the taunts and provocations of the enemy, the suspicions, the cold respect, and "mouth-honour" of those, from whom it should meet a cheerful obedience; which undisturbed by false humanity, can calmly assume that most awful moral responsibility of deciding, when victory may be too dearly purchased by the loss of a single life, and when the safety and glory of their country may demand the certain sacrifice of thousands. Different stations of command may call for different modifications of this fortitude, but the character ought to be the same in all. And never in the most "palmy state" of our martial renown did it shine with brighter lustre than in the present sanguinary and ferocious hostilities, wherever the British arms have been carried. But, in this most arduous, and momentous conflict, which from

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it's nature should have roused us to new and unexampled efforts, I know not how it has been, that we have never put forth half the strength, which we have exerted in ordinary wars. In the fatal battles, which have drenched the Continent with blood, and shaken the system of Europe to pieces, we have never had any considerable army of a magnitude to be compared to the least of those by which, in former times, we so gloriously asserted our place as protectors, not oppressors, at the head of the great Commonwealth of Europe. We have never manfully met the danger in front: and when the enemy, resigning to us our natural dominion of the ocean, and abandoning the defence of his distant possessions to the infernal energy of the destroying principles, which he had planted there for the subversion of the neighbouring Colonies, drove forth by one sweeping law of unprecedented despotism, his armed multitudes on every side, to overwhelm the Countries and States, which had for centuries stood the firm barriers against the ambition of France; we drew back the arm of our military force, which had never been more than half raised to oppose him. From that time we have been combating only with the other arm of our naval power; the right arm of England I admit; but which struck almost unresisted, with blows, that could never reach the heart of the hostile mischief.

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From that time, without a single effort to regain those outworks, which ever till now we so strenuously maintained, as the strong frontier of our own dignity and safety, no less than the liberties of Europe; with but one feeble attempt to succour those brave, faithful, and numerous allies, whom for the first time since the days of our Edwards and Henrys, we now have in the bosom of France itself; we have been intrenching, and fortifying, and garrisoning ourselves at home: we have been redoubling security on security, to protect ourselves from invasion, which has now first become to us a serious object of alarm and terrour. Alas! the few of us, who have protracted life in any measure near to the extreme limits of our short period, have been condemned to see strange things; new systems of policy, new principles, and not only new men, but what might appear a new species of men. I believe that any person who was of age to take a part in publick affairs forty years ago (if the intermediate space of time were expunged from his memory) would hardly credit his senses, when he should hear from the highest authority, that an army of two hundred thousand men was kept up in this island, and that in the neighbouring island there were at least fourscore thousand more. But when he had recovered from his surprise on being told of this army, which has not it's parallel, what must  
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be his astonishment to be told again, that this mighty force was kept up for the mere purpose of an inert and passive defence, and that, in it's far greater part, it was disabled by it's constitution and very essence, from defending us against an enemy by any one preventive stroke, or any one operation of active hostility? What must his reflexions be, on learning further, that a fleet of five hundred men of war, the best appointed, and to the full as ably commanded as this country ever had upon the sea, was for the greater part employed in carrying on the same system of unenterprising defence? What must be the sentiments and feelings of one, who remembers the former energy of England, when he is given to understand, that these two islands, with their extensive, and every where vulnerable coast, should be considered as a garrisoned sea-town; what would such a man, what would any man think, if the garrison of so strange a fortress should be such, and so feebly commanded, as never to make a sally; and that, contrary to all which has hitherto been seen in war, an infinitely inferiour army, with the shattered relicks of an almost annihilated navy, ill found, and ill manned, may with safety besiege this superiour garrison, and without hazarding the life of a man, ruin the place, merely by the menaces and false appearances of an attack? Indeed, indeed, my dear friend, I look upon this matter of our defensive



system as much the most important of all considerations at this moment. It has oppressed me with many anxious thoughts, which, more than any bodily distemper, have sunk me to the condition, in which you know that I am. Should it please Providence to restore to me, even the late weak remains of my strength, I propose to make this matter the subject of a particular discussion. I only mean here to argue, that the mode of conducting the war on our part, be it good or bad, has prevented even the common havock of war in our population, and especially among that class, whose duty and privilege of superiority it is, to lead the way amidst the perils and slaughter of the field of battle.

The other causes, which sometimes affect the numbers of the lower classes, but which I have shewn not to have existed to any such degree during this war,—penury, cold, hunger, nakedness,—do not easily reach the higher orders of society. I do not dread for them the slightest taste of these calamities from the distress and pressure of the war. They have much more to dread in that way from the confiscations, the rapines, the burnings, and the massacres, that may follow in the train of a peace which shall establish the devastating and depopulating principles and example of the French Regicides, in security, and triumph and dominion.

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In the ordinary course of human affairs, any check to population among men in ease and opulence, is less to be apprehended from what they may suffer, than from what they enjoy. Peace is more likely to be injurious to them in that respect than war. The excesses of delicacy, repose, and satiety, are as unfavourable as the extremes of hardship, toil, and want, to the increase and multiplication of our kind. Indeed, the abuse of the bounties of Nature, much more surely than any partial privation of them, tends to intercept that precious boon of a second and dearer life in our progeny, which was bestowed in the first great command to man from the All-gracious Giver of all, whose name be blessed, whether he gives or takes away. His hand, in every page of his book, has written the lesson of moderation. Our physical well-being, our moral worth, our social happiness, our political tranquillity, all depend on that controul of all our appetites and passions, which the ancients designed by the cardinal virtue of Temperance.

The only real question to our present purpose, with regard to the higher classes, is, how stands the account of their stock, as it consists in wealth of every description? Have the burthens of the war compelled them to curtail any part of their former expenditure; which, I have before observed, affords the only standard of estimating property

perty as an object of taxation? Do they enjoy all the same conveniencies, the same comforts, the same elegancies, the same luxuries, in the same, or in as many different modes as they did before the war?

In the last eleven years, there have been no less than three solemn enquiries into the finances of the kingdom, by three different Committees of your House. The first was in the year 1786. On that occasion, I remember, the Report of the Committee was examined, and sifted, and bolted to the bran, by a gentleman whose keen and powerful talents I have ever admired. He thought there was not sufficient evidence to warrant the pleasing representation, which the Committee had made, of our national prosperity. He did not believe, that our publick revenue could continue to be so productive, as they had assumed. He even went the length of recording his own inferences of doubt, in a set of resolutions, which now stand upon your Journals. And perhaps the retrospect, on which the Report proceeded, did not go far enough back, to allow any sure and satisfactory average for a ground of solid calculation. But what was the event? When the next Committee sat in 1791, they found, that, on an average of the last four years, their predecessors had fallen short in their estimate of the permanent  
taxes,



taxes by more than three hundred and forty thousand pounds a year. Surely then if I can show, that in the produce of those same taxes, and more particularly of such as affect articles of luxurious use and consumption, the four years of the war have equalled those four years of peace, flourishing, as they were, beyond the most sanguine speculations, I may expect to hear no more of the distress occasioned by the war.

The additional burdens which have been laid on some of those same articles, might reasonably claim some allowance to be made. Every new advance of the price to the consumer, is a new incentive to him to retrench the quantity of his consumption; and if, upon the whole, he pays the same, his property computed by the standard of what he voluntarily pays, must remain the same. But I am willing to forego that fair advantage in the enquiry. I am willing that the receipts of the permanent taxes which existed before January 1793, should be compared during the war, and during the period of peace which I have mentioned. I will go further. Complete accounts of the year 1791 were separately laid before your House. I am ready to stand by a comparison of the produce of four years up to the beginning of the year 1792, with that of the war. Of the year immediately previous to hostilities, I have not been able

able to obtain any perfect documents ; but I have seen enough to satisfy me, that although a comparison including that year might be less favourable, yet it would not essentially injure my argument.

You will always bear in mind, my dear Sir, that I am not considering whether, if the common enemy of the quiet of Europe had not forced us to take up arms in our own defence, the spring-tide of our prosperity might not have flowed higher than the mark at which it now stands. That consideration is connected with the question of the justice and the necessity of the war. It is a question which I have long since discussed. I am now endeavouring to ascertain whether there exists, in fact, any such necessity as we hear every day asserted, to furnish a miserable pretext for counselling us to surrender, at discretion, our conquests, our honour, our dignity, our very independence, and, with it, all that is dear to man. It will be more than sufficient for that purpose, if I can make it appear that we have been stationary during the war. What then will be said, if, in reality, it shall be proved that there is every indication of increased and increasing wealth, not only poured into the grand reservoir of the national capital, but diffused through all the channels of all the higher classes, and giving life and activity as it passes to the agriculture,

culture, the manufactures, the commerce, and the navigation of the country?

The Finance Committee, which has been appointed in this Session, has already made two reports. Every conclusion that I had before drawn, as you know, from my own observation, I have the satisfaction of seeing there confirmed by their authority. Large as was the sum, by which the Committee of 1791 found the estimate of 1786 to have been exceeded in the actual produce of four years of peace, their own estimate has been exceeded, during the war, by a sum more than one-third larger. The same taxes have yielded more than half a million beyond their calculation. They yielded this, notwithstanding the stoppage of the distilleries, against which, you may remember, that I privately remonstrated. With an allowance for that defalcation, they have yielded sixty thousand pounds annually above the actual average of the preceding four years of peace. I believe this to have been without parallel in all former wars. If regard be had to the great and unavoidable burthens of the present war, I am confident of the fact.

But let us descend to particulars. The taxes, which go by the general name of assessed taxes, comprehend the whole, or nearly the whole

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domestick establishment of the rich. They include some things, which belong to the middling, and even to all, but the very lowest, classes. They now consist of the duties on houses and windows, on male servants, horses, and carriages. They did also extend to cottages, to female servants, waggons, and carts used in husbandry, previous to the year 1792; when, with more enlightened policy, at the moment that the possibility of war could not be out of the contemplation of any statesman, the wisdom of Parliament confined them to their present objects. I shall give the gross assessment for five years, as I find it in the Appendix to the second Report of your Committee.

1791 ending 5th Apr. 1792	—	—	—	£. 1,706,334
1792 ————— 1793	—	—	—	1,585,991
1793 ————— 1794	—	—	—	1,597,623
1794 ————— 1795	—	—	—	1,608,196
1795 ————— 1796	—	—	—	1,625,874

Here will be seen a gradual increase during the whole progress of the war: and if \* I am correctly informed, the rise in the last year, after every deduction

\* The account given above is from the appendix B to the second Report. Since Mr. Burke's death, a fourth Report has come out, which very fully substantiates his information. There is a table, containing *a view of the Land Tax, and Assessed Taxes*, blended together. The amount of the Assessed Taxes may be easily found (except an occasional difference in the last figure, from the omission of the shillings and pence) by deducting the sum

duction that can be made, almost surpasses belief. It is enormously out of all proportion to the increase, not of any single year, but of all the years put together, since the time that the duties, which I have mentioned above, were repealed.

There are some other taxes, which seem to have a reference to the same general head. The present Minister, many years ago, subjected bricks and tiles to a duty under the excise. It is of little consequence to our present consideration, whether these materials have been employed in building more commodious, more elegant, and more magnificent habitations, or in enlarging, decorating, and re-modelling those, which sufficed for our plainer

sum of £.2,037,627, which is the gross charge of the Land-Tax according to the Report of the Committee in 1791.

1789 ending 5th Apr. 1790	—	—	—	£. 3,572,434
1790 ————— 1791	—	—	—	3,741,222
1791 ————— 1792	—	—	—	3,743,961
1792 ————— 1793	—	—	—	3,623,619
1793 ————— 1794	—	—	—	3,635,250
1794 ————— 1795	—	—	—	3,645,824
1795 ————— 1796	—	—	—	3,663,501
1796 ————— 1797	—	—	—	4,101,869

A ten per cent. was laid upon the Assessed Taxes in 1791, to commence from October, 1790. In 1796 were laid, a new tax on Horses not before included, an additional tax of 2s. and a new ten per cent. These produced in that year altogether £.84,232, which being deducted, will still leave an actual increase in that one year of £.354, 130.

ancestors. During the first two years of the war, they paid so largely to the publick revenue, that in 1794 a new duty was laid upon them, which was equal to one half of the old, and which has produced upwards of £.165,000 in the last three years. Yet notwithstanding the pressure of this additional weight\*, there has been an actual augmentation in the consumption. The only two other articles which come under this description, are, the stamp-duty on gold and silver plate, and the Customs on glass-plates. This latter is now, I believe, the single instance of costly furniture to be found in the catalogue of our imports. If it were wholly to vanish, I should not think we were ruined. Both the duties have risen, during the war, very considerably in proportion to the total of their produce.

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\* This and the following tables on the same construction are compiled from the Reports of the Finance Committee in 1791 and 1797, with the addition of the separate paper laid before the House of Commons, and ordered to be printed on the 7th of February 1792.

### BRICKS AND TILES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 94,521	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 122,975	
	1788	96,278		1794	106,811	
	1789	91,773		1795	83,304	
	1790	104,409		1796	94,668	
		<u>£. 386,981</u>			<u>£. 408,258</u>	
	1791	115,382	4 Yrs. to 1791		<u>£. 407,842</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 21,277
						Increase to 1791 £. 416

PLATE.



We have no tax among us on the great necessities of life with regard to food. The receipts of our Custom-House, under the head of Groceries, afford us, however, some means of calculating our luxuries of the table. The articles of Tea, Coffee, and Cocoa-Nuts, I would propose to omit, and to take them instead from the Excise, as best shewing, what is consumed at home. Upon this principle, adding them all together (with the exception of Sugar, for a reason which I shall afterwards mention) I find that they have produced, in one mode of comparison, upwards of £. 272,000, and in the other mode, upwards of £. 165,000, more, during the

PLATE.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 22,707	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 25,920	
	1788	23,295		1794	23,637	
	1789	22,453		1795	25,607	
	1790	18,483		1796	28,513	
		<u>£. 86,888</u>			<u>£. 103,677</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 16,789
	1791 - -	31,523	4 Yrs. to 1791		<u>£. 95,754</u>	Increase to 1791 £. 7,923

GLASS PLATES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. ———	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 5,655	
	1788	5,496		1794	5,456	
	1789	4,686		1795	5,839	
	1790	6,008		1795	8,871	
		<u>£. 16,190</u>			<u>£. 25,821</u>	
	1791 - -	7,880	4 Yrs. to 1791		<u>£. 24,070</u>	Increase to 1791 £. 1,721

war

war than in peace \*. An additional duty was also laid in 1795 on Tea, another on Coffee, and a third on Raisins; an article, together with currants, of

\* GROCERIES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 167,389	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 124,655	
	1788	133,191		1794	195,840	
	1789	142,871		1795	208,242	
	1790	156,311		1796	159,826	
		<u>£. 599,762</u>			<u>£. 688,563</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 88,801
	1791	236,727	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 669,100		Increase to 1791 £. 19,463

TEA.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 424,144	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 477,644	
	1788	426,660		1794	467,132	
	1789	539,575		1795	507,518	
	1790	417,736		1796	526,307	
		<u>£. 1,808,115</u>			<u>£. 1,978,601</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 170,486
	1791	448,709	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 1,832,680		Increase to 1791 £. 145,921

The additional duty imposed in 1795, produced in that year £.137,656, and in 1796 £.200,107.

COFFEE AND COCOA NUTS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 17,006	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 36,846	
	1788	30,217		1794	49,177	
	1789	34,784		1795	27,913	
	1790	38,647		1796	19,711	
		<u>£. 120,654</u>			<u>£. 133,647</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 12,993
	1791	41,194	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 144,842		Decrease to 1791 £. 11,195

The additional duty of 1795 in that year gave £.16,775, and in 1796 £.15,319.

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much more extensive use, than would readily be imagined. The balance in our favour would have been much enhanced, if our Coffee and fruit-ships from the Mediterranean had arrived, last year, at their usual season. They do not appear in these accounts. This was one consequence arising (would to God, that none more afflicting to Italy, to Europe, and the whole civilized world had arisen!) from our impolitick and precipitate desertion, of that important maritime station. As to \*Sugar, I have excluded it from the Groceries, because the account of the Customs is not a perfect criterion of the consumption, much having been re-exported to the north of Europe, which used to be supplied by France; and there are no materials to furnish grounds for computing this re-exportation. The increase on the face of our entries is immense during the four years of war, little short of thirteen hundred thousand pounds.

## \* SUGAR.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 1,065,109	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 1,473,139	
	1788	1,184,458		1794	1,392,965	
	1789	1,095,106		1795	1,338,246	
	1790	1,069,108		1796	1,474,899	
		<u>£. 4,413,781</u>			<u>£. 5,679,249</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 1,265,468
	1791	1,044,053	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 4,392,725		Increase to 1791 £. 1,286,524

There was a new duty on *Sugar* in 1791, which produced in 1794 £.234,292, in 1795 £.206,932, and in 1796 £.245,024. It is not clear from the Report of the Committee, whether the additional duty is included in the account given above.

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The encrease of the duties on Beer has been regularly progressive, or nearly so, to a very large amount.\* It is a good deal above a million, and is more than equal to one-eight of the whole produce. Under this general head, some other liquors are included,—Cyder, Perry, and Mead, as well as Vinegar, and Verjuice; but these are of very trifling consideration. The Excise-Duties on Wine, having sunk a little during the first two years of the war, were rapidly recovering their level again. In 1795, a heavy additional duty was imposed upon them, and a second in the following year; yet being compared with four years of peace to the end of 1790, they actually exhibit a small gain to the revenue. And low as the importation may seem in 1796, when contrasted with any year since the French Treaty in 1787, it is still more than 3000 tons above the average importation for three years previous to that period. I have added Sweets, from which our factitious Wines are made; and

## \* BEER, &amp;c.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 1,761,429	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 2,043,902	
	1788	1,705,199		1794	2,082,053	
	1789	1,742,514		1795	1,931,101	
	1790	1,858,043		1796	2,294,377	
		<u>£. 7,067,185</u>			<u>£. 8,351,433</u>	Increase to 1796
						£. 1,284,248
	1791	1,880,478	Yrs. to 1791	£. 7,186,234		Increase to 1791
		<u>1,880,478</u>				£. 1,165,199

WINE.

and I would have added Spirits, but that the total alteration of the duties in 1789, and the recent interruption of our Distilleries, rendered any comparison impracticable.

## WINE.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 219,934	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 222,887	
	1788	215,578		1794	283,644	
	1789	252,649		1795	317,072	
	1790	308,624		1796	187,818	
		<u>£. 996,785</u>			<u>£. 1,011,421</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 14,638
	1791	336,549	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 1,113,400		Decrease to 1791 £. 101,979

## QUANTITY IMPORTED.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	Tons	29,978	Yrs. of War.	1793	Tons	22,788
	1788		25,442		1794		27,868
	1789		27,414		1795		32,033
	1790		29,182		1796		19,079

The additional duty of 1795 produced that year £. 730,871, and in 1796 £. 394,686. A second additional duty which produced £. 98,165, was laid in 1796.

## SWEETS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 11,167	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 11,016	
	1788	7,375		1794	10,612	
	1789	7,202		1795	13,321	
	1790	4,953		1796	15,050	
		<u>£. 30,697</u>			<u>£. 49,990</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 19,302
	1791	13,282	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 32,812		Increase to 1791 £. 17,178

In 1795, an additional duty was laid on this article, which produced that year £. 5,679, and in 1796 £. 9,443, and in 1796 a second to commence on the 20th of June; its produce in that year was £. 2,325.

The ancient staple of our island, in which we are clothed, is very imperfectly to be traced on the books of the Custom-House: but I know, that our Woollen Manufactures flourish. I recollect to have seen that fact very fully established, last year, from the registers kept in the West-Riding of Yorkshire. This year, in the west of England I received a similar account, on the authority of a respectable clothier, in that quarter, whose testimony can less be questioned, because, in his political opinions, he is adverse, as I understand, to the continuance of the war. The principal articles of female dress, for some time past, have been Muslins and Callicoes.\* These elegant fabricks of our own looms in the East, which serve for the remittance of our own revenues, have lately been imitated at home, with improving success, by the ingenious and enterprising manufacturers of Manchester, Paisley, and Glasgow. At the same time

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\* MUSLINS AND CALLICOES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1788	£. 129,297	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 173,050	
	1789	138,660		1794	104,902	
	1790	126,267		1795	103,856	
	1791	128,364		1796	272,544	
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1791
		£. 522,588			£. 654,352	
		<hr/>			<hr/>	£. 131,764

This table begins with 1788. The net produce of the preceding year is not in the Report, whence the table is taken.

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the importation from Bengal has kept pace with the extension of our own dexterity and industry; while the sale of our \* printed goods, of both kinds, has been with equal steadiness advanced, by the taste and execution of our designers and artists. Our Woollens and Cottons, it is true, are not all for the home market. They do not distinctly prove, what is my present point, our own wealth by our own expence. I admit it: we export them in great and growing quantities: and they, who croak themselves hoarse about the decay of our trade, may put as much of this account, as they chuse, to the creditor side of money received from other countries in payment for British skill and labour. They may settle the items to their own liking, where all goes to demonstrate our riches. I shall be contented here, with what-

## \* PRINTED GOODS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 142,000	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 191,566	
	1788	154,486		1794	190,554	
	1789	153,202		1795	197,416	
	1790	167,156		1796	230,530	
		<u>£. 616,844</u>			<u>£. 810,066</u>	Increase to 1790 £. 193,222
	1791	£. 191,480	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 666,333		Increase to 1791 £. 143,733

These duties for 1787, are blended with several others. The proportion of printed goods to the other articles for four years, was found to be one-fourth. That proportion is here taken.

ever they will have the goodness to leave me, and pass to another entry, which is less ambiguous ;—I mean that of Silk.\* The manufactory itself is a forced plant. We have been obliged to guard it from foreign competition by very strict prohibitory laws. What we import, is the raw and prepared material, which is worked up in various ways, and worn in various shapes by both sexes. After what we have just seen, you will probably be surprised to learn, that the quantity of silk, imported during the war, has been much greater, than it was previously in peace ; and yet we must all remember to our mortification, that several of our silk ships fell a prey to Citizen Admiral Richery. You will hardly expect me to go through the tape and thread, and all the other small wares of haberdashery and millinery to be gleaned up among our imports. But I shall make one observation, and with great satisfaction, respecting them. They gradually diminish, as our own manufactures of the same

## \* SILK.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 159,912	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 209,915	
	1788	123,998		1794	221,306	
	1789	157,730		1795	210,725	
	1790	212,522		1796	221,007	
		<u>£. 654,162</u>			<u>£. 862,955</u>	Increase to 1790
						£. 208,793
						Increase to 1791
	1791 - -	279,128	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 773,378		£. 89,577

description

description spread into their places; while the account of ornamental articles which our country does not produce, and we cannot wish it to produce, continues, upon the whole, to rise, in spite of all the caprices of fancy and fashion. Of this kind are the different furs\* used for muffs, trimmings, and linings, which, as the chief of the kind, I shall particularize. You will find them below.

The diversions of the higher classes form another, and the only remaining, head of enquiry into their expences. I mean those diversions which distinguish the country and the town life; which are visible and tangible to the Statesman; which have some publick measure and standard. And here, when I look to the Report of your Committee, I, for the first time, perceive a failure.

* FURS.					
Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 3,463	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 2,829
	1788	2,957		1794	3,353
	1789	1,151		1795	3,266
	1790	3,328		1796	6,138
		<u>£. 10,899</u>			<u>£. 15,586</u>
					Increase to 1790 £. 4,687
					Increase to 1791 £. 2,419
	1791	- - 5,731	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 13,167	

The skins here selected from the Custom-House Accounts are, *Black Bear, Ordinary Fox, Marten, Mink, Musquash, Otter, Raccoon, and Wolf.*

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It is clearly so. Whichever way I reckon the four years of peace, the old tax on the sports of the field has certainly proved deficient since the war. The same money, however, or nearly the same, has been paid to Government; though the same number of individuals have not contributed to the payment. An additional tax was laid in 1791, and, during the war, has produced upwards of 61,000*l.*; which is about 4000*l.* more than the decrease of the old tax, in one scheme of comparison; and about 4000*l.* less, in the other scheme. I might remark that the amount of the new tax, in the several years of the war, by no means bears the proportion, which it ought, to the old. There seems to be some great irregularity, or other, in the receipt: but I do not think it worth while to examine into the argument. I am willing to suppose, that many, who, in the idleness of peace, made war upon partridges, hares, and pheasants, may now carry more noble arms against the enemies of their country. Our political adversaries may do, what they please, with that concession. They are welcome to make the most of it. I am sure of a very handsome set-off in the other branch of expence; the amusements of a town-life.

There is much gaiety, and dissipation, and profusion, which must escape and disappoint all the arithmetick of political oeconomy. But the  
Theatres

Theatres are a prominent feature. They are established through every part of the kingdom, at a cost unknown till our days. There is hardly a provincial capital, which does not possess, or which does not aspire to possess, a Theatre-Royal. Most of them engage, for a short time at a vast price, every actor or actress of name in the metropolis; a distinction, which, in the reign of my old friend Garrick, was confined to very few. The dresses, the scenes, the decorations of every kind, I am told, are in a new style of splendour and magnificence; whether to the advantage of our dramatick taste, upon the whole, I very much doubt. It is a shew, and a spectacle, not a play, that is exhibited. This is undoubtedly in the genuine manner of the Augustan age, but in a manner, which was censured by one of the best Poets and Criticks of that or any age:

—migravit ab aure voluptas  
 Omnis ad incertos oculos, & gaudia vana:  
 Quatuor aut plures aulae premuntur in horas,  
 Dum fugiunt equitum turmae, peditumque catervae;—

I must interrupt the passage, most fervently to deprecate and abominate the sequel,

Mox trahitur manibus Regum fortuna retortis.

I hope, that no French fraternization, which the relations of peace and amity with systematized Regicide,

gicide, would assuredly, sooner or later, draw after them, even if it should overturn our happy Constitution itself, could so change the hearts of Englishmen, as to make them delight in representations and processions, which have no other merit than that of degrading and insulting the name of Royalty. But good taste, manners, morals, religion, all fly, wherever the principles of Jacobinism enter: and we have no safety against them but in arms.

The Proprietors, whether in this they follow or lead what is called the town, to furnish out these gaudy and pompous entertainments, must collect so much more from the Publick. It was but just before the breaking out of hostilities, that they levied for themselves the very tax, which, at the close of the American war, they represented to Lord North, as certain ruin to their affairs to demand for the State. The example has since been imitated by the Managers of our Italian Opera. Once during the war, if not twice (I would not willingly mistake any thing, but I am not very accurate on these subjects) they have raised the price of their subscription. Yet I have never heard, that any lasting dissatisfaction has been manifested, or that their houses have been unusually and constantly thin. On the contrary, all the three theatres have been repeatedly altered, and refitted,



refitted, and enlarged, to make them capacious of the crowds, that nightly flock to them; and one of those huge and lofty piles, which lifts its broad shoulders in gigantick pride, almost emulous of the temples of God, has been reared from the foundation at a charge of more than fourscore thousand pounds, and yet remains a naked, rough, unsightly heap.

I am afraid, my dear Sir, that I have tired you with these dull, though important details. But we are upon a subject, which, like some of a higher nature, refuses ornament, and is contented with conveying instruction. I know too, the obstinacy of unbelief, in those perverted minds, which have no delight, but in contemplating the supposed distress, and predicting the immediate ruin, of their country. These birds of evil presage, at all times, have grated our ears with their melancholy song; and, by some strange fatality or other, it has generally happened, that they have poured forth their loudest and deepest lamentations, at the periods of our most abundant prosperity. Very early in my publick life, I had occasion to make myself a little acquainted with their natural history. My first political tract in the collection, which a friend has made of my publications, is an answer to a very gloomy picture of the state of the nation, which was thought to have been drawn by a statesman of

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some eminence in his time. That was no more than the common spleen of disappointed ambition : in the present day, I fear, that too many are actuated by a more malignant and dangerous spirit. They hope, by depressing our minds with a despair of our means and resources, to drive us, trembling and unresisting, into the toils of our enemies, with whom, from the beginning of the Revolution in France, they have ever moved in strict concert and co-operation. If with the report of your Finance Committee in their hands, they can still affect to despond, and can still succeed, as they do, in spreading the contagion of their pretended fears, among well-disposed, though weak men ; there is no way of counteracting them, but by fixing them down to particulars. Nor must we forget, that they are unwearied agitators, bold assertors, dextrous sophisters. Proof must be accumulated upon proof, to silence them. With this view, I shall now direct your attention to some other striking and unerring indications of our flourishing condition ; and they will in general, be derived from other sources, but equally authentick ; from other reports and proceedings of both Houses of Parliament, all which unite with wonderful force of consent in the same general result. Hitherto we have seen the superfluity of our capital discovering itself only in procuring superfluous accommodation and enjoyment, in our houses, in our furniture, in our establishments.

establishments, in our eating and drinking, our clothing, and our publick diversions: we shall now see it more beneficially employed in improving our territory itself: we shall see part of our present opulence, with provident care, put out to usury for posterity.

To what ultimate extent, it may be wise or practicable, to push inclosures of common and waste lands, may be a question of doubt, in some points of view: but no person thinks them already carried to excess; and the relative magnitude of the sums, laid out upon them, gives us a standard of estimating the comparative situation of the landed interest. Your House, this Session, appointed a Committee on Waste Lands, and they have made a Report by their chairman, an Honourable Baronet, for whom the Minister the other day, (with very good intentions, I believe, but with little real profit to the publick) thought fit to erect a Board of Agriculture. The account, as it stands there, appears sufficiently favourable. The greatest number of inclosing bills, passed in any one year of the last peace, does not equal the smallest annual number in the war; and those of the last year exceed, by more than one half, the highest year of peace. But what was my surprise, on looking into the late report of the Secret Committee of the Lords, to find a list of these Bills during the war,





they were very far short of the number passed in the four years of hostilities.

In my first Letter I mentioned the state of our inland navigation, neglected as it had been from the reign of King William to the time of my observation. It was not till the present reign, that the Duke of Bridgwater's canal first excited a spirit of speculation and adventure in this way. This spirit shewed itself, but necessarily made no great progress, in the American war. When peace was restored, it began of course to work with more sensible effect; yet in ten years from that event, the Bills passed on that subject were not so many as from the year 1793 to the present Session of Parliament. From what I can trace on the Statute-Book, I am confident that all the capital expended in these projects during the peace, bore no degree of proportion, (I doubt on very grave consideration whether all that was ever so expended was equal) to the money which has been raised for the same purposes, since the war.\* I know, that in the last four years of

* NAVIGATION AND CANAL BILLS.									
4 Yrs. of Peace.	1789	—	—	3	4 Yrs. of War.	1793	—	—	28
	1790	—	—	8		1794	—	—	18
	1791	—	—	10		1795	—	—	11
	1792	—	—	9		1796	—	—	12
				30					69
Money raised				£.2,377,200					£.7,415,100

peace, when they rose regularly, and rapidly, the sums specified in the acts were not near one-third of the subsequent amount. In the last Session of Parliament, the Grand Junction Company, as it is called, having sunk half a million, (of which I feel the good effects at my own door) applied to your House, for permission to subscribe half as much more, among themselves. This Grand Junction is an inoculation of the Grand Trunk: and in the present Session, the latter Company has obtained the authority of Parliament, to float two hundred acres of land, for the purpose of forming a reservoir, thirty feet deep, two hundred yards wide at the head, and two miles in length; a lake which may almost vie with that which feeds, what once was, the now obliterated canal of Languedoc.

The present war is, above all others, (of which we have heard or read) a war against landed property. That description of property is in it's nature the firm base of every stable government; and has been so considered, by all the wisest writers of the old philosophy, from the time of the Stagyrte, who observes that the agricultural class of all others is the least inclined to sedition. We find it to have been so regarded, in the practical politicks of antiquity, where they are brought more directly home to our understandings and bosoms, in the History of Rome, and above all, in the writings of Cicero. The country tribes were always thought more respectable, than  
those



those of the City. And if in our own History, there is any one circumstance to which, under God, are to be attributed the steady resistance, the fortunate issue, and sober settlement, of all our struggles for liberty, it is, that while the landed interest, instead of forming a separate body, as in other countries, has, at all times, been in close connexion and union with the other great interests of the country, it has been spontaneously allowed to lead and direct, and moderate all the rest. I cannot, therefore, but see with singular gratification, that during a war which has been eminently made for the destruction of the landed proprietors, as well as of Priests and Kings, as much has been done, by publick works, for the permanent benefit of their stake in this country, as in all the rest of the current century, which now touches to it's close. Perhaps, after this, it may not be necessary to refer to private observation; but I am satisfied, that in general, the rents of lands have been considerably increased: they are increased very considerably indeed, if I may draw any conclusion from my own little property of that kind. I am not ignorant, however, where our publick burdens are most galling. But all of this class will consider, who they are, that are principally menaced; how little the men of their description in other countries, where this revolutionary fury has but touched, have been found equal to their own protection; how tardy, and unprovided, and full of anguish

anguish is their flight, chained down as they are by every tie to the soil; how helpless they are, above all other men, in exile, in poverty, in need, in all the varieties of wretchedness; and then let them well weigh, what are the burdens, to which they ought not to submit for their own salvation.

Many of the authorities, which I have already adduced, or to which I have referred, may convey a competent notion of some of our principal manufactures. Their general state will be clear from that of our external and internal commerce, through which they circulate, and of which they are at once, the cause and effect. But the communication of the several parts of the kingdom with each other, and with foreign countries, has always been regarded as one of the most certain tests to evince the prosperous or adverse state of our trade in all its branches. Recourse has usually been had to the revenue of the Post Office with this view. I shall include the product of the Tax which was laid in the last war, and which will make the evidence more conclusive, if it shall afford the same inference:—I allude to the Post-Horse duty, which shews the personal intercourse within the Kingdom, as the Post-Office shews the intercourse by letters, both within and without. The first of these standards, then, exhibits an increase, according to my former schemes of comparison, from an eleventh to a twentieth part  
of

of the \*whole duty. The Post-office, gives still less consolation to those who are miserable, in proportion as the country feels no misery. From the commencement of the war, to the month of April, 1796, the gross produce had encreased by nearly one sixth of the whole sum, which the state now derives from that fund. I find that the year ending 5th of April, 1793, gave £627,592, and the year ending at the same quarter in 1796, £.750,637. after a fair deduction having been made for the alteration (which, you know, on grounds of policy I never approved) in your privilege of franking. I have seen no formal document subsequent to that period, but I have been credibly informed, there is very good ground to believe, that the revenue of the † Post-office still continues to be regularly and largely upon the rise.

What

\* POST HORSE DUTY.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 169,410	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 191,488	
	1788	204,659		1794	202,884	
	1789	170,554		1795	196,691	
	1790	181,155		1796	204,061	
		<u>£. 725,778</u>			<u>£. 795,124</u>	Increase 1790
						to 1791.
	1791 - -	198,634	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 755,002	£. 40,122	

† The above account is taken from a paper which was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 8th December, 1796. From the gross produce of the year ending 5th April, 1796, there has been deducted in that statement the sum of  
£. 36,666,



What is the true inference to be drawn from the annual number of Bankruptcies, has been the occasion of much dispute. On one side, it has been confidently urged as a sure symptom of a decaying trade: on the other side, it has been insisted, that it is a circumstance attendant upon a thriving trade; for that the greater is the whole quantity of trade, the greater of course must be the positive number of failures, while the aggregate success is still in the same proportion. In truth, the increase of the

£.36,666, in consequence of the regulation on franking, which took place on the 5th May, 1795, and was computed at £.40,000. per ann. To shew an equal number of years, both of peace and war, the accounts of two preceding years are given in the following table, from a Report made since Mr. Burke's death by a Committee of the House of Commons appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Palmer, the late Comptroller General; and for still greater satisfaction, the number of letters, inwards and outwards, have been added, except for the year 1790-1791. The letter-book for that year is not to be found.

POST OFFICE.		Number of Letters.	
	Gross Revenue.	Inwards.	Outwards.
Apr. 1790—1791	575,079	- - - - -	- - - - -
1791—1792	585,432	6,391,149	5,081,344
1792—1793	627,592	6,584,867	5,041,137
1793—1794	691,268	7,094,777	6,537,234
1794—1795	705,319	7,071,029	7,473,626
1795—1796	750,637	7,641,077	8,597,167

From the last mentioned Report it appears that the accounts have not been completely and authentically made up, for the years ending 5th April, 1796 and 1797, but on the Receiver-General's books there is an increase of the latter year over the former, equal to something more than 5 per cent.

number,

number, may arise from either of those causes. But all must agree in one conclusion, that, if the number diminishes, and at the same time, every other sort of evidence tends to shew an augmentation of trade, there can be no better indication. We have already had very ample means of gathering, that the year 1796 was a very favourable year of trade, and in that year the number of Bankruptcies was at least one-fifth below the usual average. I take this from \* the Declaration of the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords. He professed to speak from the records of Chancery; and he added another very striking fact, that on the property actually paid into his Court (a very small part, indeed, of the whole property of the kingdom) there had accrued in that year a nett surplus of eight hundred thousand pounds, which was so much new capital.

But the real situation of our trade, during the whole of this war, deserves more minute investigation. I shall begin with that, which, though the least in consequence, makes perhaps the most impression on our senses, because it meets our eyes in our daily walks;—I mean our retail trade. The exuberant display of wealth in our shops was the sight, which most amazed a learned foreigner of distinc-

\* In a debate, 30th December, 1796, on the return of Lord Malmesbury.—See Woodfall's Parliamentary Debates, vol. xiii. page 594.

tion, who lately resided among us: his expression, I remember, was, that "*they seemed to be bursting with opulence into the streets*" The documents, which throw light on this subject, are not many; but they all meet in the same point: all concur in exhibiting an increase. The most material are the General Licences \* which the law requires to be taken out by all dealers in exciseable commodities. These seem to be subject to considerable fluctuations. They have not been so low in any year of the war, as in the years 1788 and 1789, nor ever so high in peace, as in the first year of the war. I should next state the licences to dealers in Spirits and Wine, but the change in them which took place in 1789 would give an unfair advantage to my argument. I shall therefore content myself with remarking, that from the date of that change the spirit licences kept nearly the same level till the stoppage of the Distilleries in 1795. If they dropped a little, and it was but little, the Wine Licences during the same time, more than counterbalanced

\* GENERAL LICENCES.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 44,030	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 45,568	
	1788	40,882		1794	42,129	
	1789	39,917		1795	43,350	
	1790	41,970		1796	41,190	
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1790
		£. 166,799			£. 170,237	£. 3,438
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1791
	1791 - -	44,240	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 167,009		£. 3,228
		<hr/>		<hr/>		

that



that loss to the revenue; and it is remarkable with regard to the latter, that in the year 1796, which was the lowest in the excise duties on wine itself, as well as in the quantity imported, more dealers in wine appear to have been licenced, than in any former year, excepting the first year of the war. This fact may raise some doubt, whether the consumption has been lessened so much, as I believe, is commonly imagined. The only other retail-traders, whom I found so entered as to admit of being selected, are Tea-Dealers, and sellers of Gold and Silver Plate; both of whom seem to have multiplied very much in proportion to their aggregate number.

\* DEALERS IN TEA.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 10,934	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 13,939	
	1788	11,949		1794	14,315	
	1789	12,501		1795	13,956	
	1790	13,126		1796	14,830	
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1790
		£. 48,510			£. 57,040	£. 8,530
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1791
	1791	- - 13,921	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 51,497		£. 5,543

SELLERS OF PLATE.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 6,593	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 8,178	
	1788	7,953		1794	8,296	
	1789	7,348		1795	8,128	
	1790	7,988		1796	8,835	
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1790
		£. 29,882			£. 33,437	£. 3,555
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1791
	1791	- - 8,327	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 31,616		£. 1,821

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I have kept apart one set of licenced sellers, because I am aware, that our antagonists may be inclined to triumph a little, when I name Auctioneers and Auctions. They may be disposed to consider it as a sort of trade, which thrives by the distress of others. But if they will look at it a little more attentively, they will find their gloomy comfort vanish. The publick income from these licences, has risen with very great regularity, through a series of years, which all must admit to have been years of prosperity. It is remarkable too, that in the year 1793, which was the great year of Bankruptcies, these \* duties on Auctioneers and Auctions, fell below the mark of 1791; and in 1796, which year had one fifth less than the accustomed average of Bankruptcies, they mounted at once beyond all former examples. In concluding this general head, will you permit me, my dear Sir, to bring to your notice an humble, but industrious and laborious set of chapmen against whom the vengeance of your House has sometimes been levelled, with what policy I need

\* AUCTIONS AND AUCTIONEERS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1787	£. 48,964	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 70,004	
	1788	53,993		1794	82,659	
	1789	52,024		1795	86,890	
	1790	53,156		1796	109,594	
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1790
		£. 208,137			£. 349,147	£. 141,010
		<hr/>			<hr/>	Increase to 1791
	1791	- - 70,973	4 Yrs. to 1791	£. 230,146		£. 119,001
		<hr/>		<hr/>		

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not stay to enquire, as they have escaped without much injury? \*The Hawkers and Pedlars, I am assured, are still doing well, though from some new arrangements respecting them made in 1789, it would be difficult to trace their proceedings in any satisfactory manner.

When such is the vigour of our traffick in it's minutest ramifications, we may be persuaded that the root and the trunk are sound. When we see the life-blood of the State circulate so freely through the capillary vessels of the system, we scarcely need enquire, if the heart performs its functions aright. But let us approach it; let us lay it bare, and watch the systole and diastole, as it now receives, and now pours forth the vital stream through all the members. The port of London

\* Since Mr. Burke's death a fourth Report of the Committee of Finance has made it's appearance. An account is there given from the Stamp-office of the gross produce of duties on Hawkers and Pedlars for four years of peace and four of war. It is therefore added in the manner of the other tables.

#### HAWKERS AND PEDLARS.

Yrs. of Peace.	1789	£. 6,132	Yrs. of War.	1793	£. 6,042
	1790	6,708		1794	6,104
	1791	6,482		1795	6,795
	1792	6,008		1796	7,882
		<hr/>			<hr/>
		£. 25,330			£. 26,823
		<hr/>			<hr/>
	Increase in 4 Years of War - - - -				£. 1,493
					<hr/>

has



has always supplied the main evidence of the state of our commerce. I know, that amidst all the difficulties and embarrassments of the year 1793, from causes unconnected with, and prior to the war, the tonnage of ships in the Thames actually rose. But I shall not go through a detail of official papers on this point. There is evidence which has appeared this very session before your House, infinitely more forcible and impressive to my apprehension, than all the journals and ledgers of all the Inspectors General from the days of Davenant. It is such as cannot carry with it any sort of fallacy. It comes, not from one set, but from many opposite sets of witnesses, who all agree in nothing else; witnesses of the gravest and most unexceptionable character, and who confirm what they say, in the surest manner, by their conduct. Two different bills have been brought in for improving the port of London. I have it from very good intelligence, that when the project was first suggested from necessity, there were no less than eight different plans, supported by eight different bodies of subscribers. The cost of the least was estimated at two hundred thousand pounds, and of the most extensive, at twelve hundred thousand. The two, between which the contest now lies, substantially agree (as all the others must have done) in the motives and reasons of the preamble: but I shall confine myself to that bill which is proposed  
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on the part of the Mayor, Aldermen, and common Council, because I regard them as the best authority, and their language in itself is fuller and more precise. I certainly see them complain of the "great delays, accidents, damages, losses, and extraordinary expences, which are almost continually sustained, to the hindrance and discouragement of commerce, and the great injury of the publick avenues." But what are the causes to which they attribute their complaints? The first is, "THAT FROM THE VERY GREAT AND PROGRESSIVE INCREASE OF THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF SHIPS AND OTHER VESSELS, TRADING TO THE PORT OF LONDON; the River Thames is, in general, so much crouded that the navigation of a considerable part of the river is rendered tedious and dangerous; and there is much want of room for the safe and convenient mooring of vessels, and constant access to them." The second is of the same nature. It is the want of regulations and arrangements, never before found necessary, for expedition and facility. The third is of another kind, but to the same effect: "that the legal quays are too confined, and there is not sufficient accommodation for the landing and shipping of cargoes." And the fourth and last is still different; they describe "the avenues to the legal quays," (which little more than a century since, the great fire of London opened

and dilated beyond the measure of our then circumstances) to be now "much too narrow, and "incommodious, for the great concourse of carts "and other carriages usually passing and repassing "there." Thus, our trade has grown too big for the ancient limits of art and nature. Our streets, our lanes, our shores, the river itself, which has so long been our pride, are impeded, and obstructed, and choaked up by our riches. They are like our shops, "bursting with opulence." To these misfortunes, to these distresses and grievances alone, we are told it is to be imputed, that still more of our capital has not been pushed into the channel of our commerce, to roll back in it's reflux still more abundant capital, and fructify the national treasury in it's course. Indeed, my dear Sir, when I have before my eyes this consentient testimony of the Corporation of the City of London, the West-India Merchants, and all the other Merchants who promoted the other plans, struggling and contending, which of them shall be permitted to lay out their money in consonance with their testimony; I cannot turn aside to examine what one or two violent petitions, tumultuously voted by real or pretended Liverymen of London, may have said of the utter destruction and annihilation of trade.

This opens a subject, on which every true lover of his country, and at this crisis, every friend to  
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the liberties of Europe, and of social order in every country, must dwell and expatiate with delight. I mean to wind up all my proofs of our astonishing and almost incredible prosperity, with the valuable information given to the Secret Committee of the Lords by the Inspector-General. And here I am happy that I can administer an antidote to all despondence, from the same dispensary from which the first dose of poison was supposed to have come. The Report of that Committee is generally believed to have been drawn up, (and it is certainly done with great ability) by the same noble Lord, who was said, as the author of the pamphlet of 1795, to have led the way in teaching us to place all our hope on that very experiment, which he afterwards declared in his place to have been from the beginning utterly without hope. We have now his authority to say, that as far as our resources were concerned, the experiment was equally without necessity.

“ It appears,” as he has very justly and satisfactorily observed, “ by the accounts of the value of the “ imports and exports for the last twenty years, “ produced by Mr. Irving, that the demand for cash to be sent abroad” (which by the way, including the loan to the Emperor, was nearly one third less sent to the Continent of Europe, than in the seven years war) “ was greatly compen-

“fated by a very large balance of commerce in  
 “favour of this kingdom; greater than was ever  
 “known in any preceding period. The value of  
 “the exports of the last year amounted, according  
 “to the valuation on which the accounts of the In-  
 “specter General are founded, to £.30,424,184;  
 “which is more than double what it was in any  
 “year of the American war; and one-third more  
 “than it was on an average during the last peace,  
 “previous to the year 1792; and though the value  
 “of the imports to this country has, during the  
 “same peace, greatly increased, the excess of the  
 “value of the exports above that of the imports,  
 “which constitutes the balance of trade, has aug-  
 “mented even in a greater proportion.” These  
 observations might perhaps be branched out into  
 other points of view, but I shall leave them to your  
 own active and ingenious mind. There is another,  
 and still more important light in which the Inspector  
 General’s information may be seen; and that is,  
 as affording a comparison of some circumstances  
 in this war, with the commercial history of all  
 our other wars in the present century.

In all former hostilities, our exports gradually  
 declined in value, and then (with one single excep-  
 tion) ascended again, till they reached and passed  
 the level of the preceding peace. But this was a  
 work of time, sometimes more, sometimes less slow.

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In Queen Anne's war, which began in 1702, it was an interval of ten years, before this was effected. Nine years only were necessary in the war of 1739, for the same operation. The seven years war saw the period much shortened: hostilities began in 1755, and in 1758, the fourth year of the war, the exports mounted above the peace-mark. There was, however, a distinguishing feature of that war, that our tonnage, to the very last moment, was in a state of great depression, while our commerce was chiefly carried on by foreign vessels. The American war was darkened with singular and peculiar adversity. Our exports never came near to their peaceful elevation, and our tonnage continued with very little fluctuation, to subside lower and lower \*. On the other hand, the present war, with regard to our commerce, has the white mark of as singular felicity. If from internal causes, as well as the consequence of hostilities, the tide ebbed in 1793, it rushed back again with a bore in the following year; and from that time has continued to swell, and run, every successive year, higher and higher into all our ports. The value of our exports last year above the year 1792 (the mere increase of our commerce during the war) is equal to the average value of

\* This account is extracted from different parts of Mr. Chalmers's Estimate. It is but just to mention, that in Mr. Chalmers's Estimate, the sums are uniformly lower, than those of the same year in Mr. Irving's account.



all the exports during the wars of William and Anne.

It has been already pointed out, that our imports have not kept pace with our exports; of course, on the face of the account, the balance of trade, both positively and comparatively considered, must have been much more than ever in our favour. In that early little tract of my mine, to which I have already more than once referred, I made many observations on the usual method of computing that balance, as well as the usual objection to it, that the entries at the Custom-House were not always true. As you probably remember them, I shall not repeat them here. On the one hand, I am not surprised that the same trite objection is perpetually renewed by the detractors of our national affluence; and on the other hand I am gratified in perceiving, that the balance of trade seems to be now computed in a manner much clearer, than it used to be, from those errors which I formerly noticed. The Inspector-General appears to have made his estimate with every possible guard and caution. His opinion is entitled to the greatest respect. It was in substance (I shall again use the words of the noble Reporter, as much better than my own) “ That the  
 “ true balance of our trade amounted, on a me-  
 “ dium of the four years preceding January 1796,  
 “ to upwards of £.6,500,000, per annum, exclu-  
 “ five

“ five of the profits arising from our East and West India trade, which he estimates at upwards of £.4,000,000 per annum; exclusive of the profits derived from our fisheries.” So that including the fisheries, and making a moderate allowance for the exceedings, which Mr. Irving himself supposes, beyond his calculation; without reckoning, what the publick creditors themselves pay to themselves, and without taking one shilling from the stock of the landed interest; our colonies, our oriental possessions, our skill and industry, our commerce, and navigation, at the commencement of this year, were pouring a new annual capital into the kingdom; hardly half a million short of the whole interest of that tremendous debt, from which we are taught to shrink in dismay, as from an overwhelming and intolerable oppression.

If then the real state of this nation is such as I have described, and I am only apprehensive, that you may think, I have taken too much pains to exclude all doubt on this question; if no class is lessened in it's numbers, or in it's stock, or in it's conveniencies, or even it's luxuries; if they build as many habitations, and as elegant and as commodious as ever, and furnish them with every chargeable decoration, and every prodigality of ingenious invention, that can be thought of by those who even encumber their necessities with superfluous accommodation;

commodation; if they are as numerously attended; if their equipages are as splendid; if they regale at table with as much or more variety of plenty than ever; if they are clad in as expensive and changeful a diversity according to their tastes and modes; if they are not deterred from the pleasures of the field by the charges, which Government has wisely turned from the culture to the sports of the field; if the theatres are as rich and as well filled and greater, and at a higher price than ever; (and, what is more important than all) if it is plain from the treasures which are spread over the soil, or confided to the winds and the seas, that there are as many who are indulgent to their propensities of parsimony, as others to their voluptuous desires, and that the pecuniary capital grows instead of diminishing; on what ground are we authorized to say, that a nation, gamboling in an ocean of superfluity is undone by want? With what face can we pretend, that they who have not denied any one gratification to any one appetite, have a right to plead poverty in order to furnish their virtues, and to put their duties on short allowance? That they are to take the law from an imperious enemy, and can contribute no longer to the honour of their king, to the support of the independence of their country, to the salvation of that Europe, which, if it falls, much crush them with its gigantick ruins? How can they affect to sweat, and stagger, and groan under



under their burthens, to whom the mines of Newfoundland, richer than those of Mexico and Peru, are now thrown in as a make-weight in the scale of their exorbitant opulence? How can they faint, and creep, and cringe, and prostrate themselves at the footstool of ambition and crime, who, during a short though violent struggle, which they have never supported with the energy of men, have amassed more to their annual accumulation, than all the well-husbanded capital, that enabled their ancestors by long, and doubtful, and obstinate conflicts, to protect, and liberate, and vindicate the civilized world. But I do not accuse the people of England. As to the great majority of them, they have done whatever in their several ranks, and conditions, and descriptions, was required of them by their relative situations in society; and from those the great mass of mankind cannot depart, without the subversion of all publick order. They look up to that Government, which they obey that they may be protected. They ask to be led and directed by those rulers, whom Providence and the laws of their country have set over them, to the attainment of their own safety, and welfare, and honour. They have again delegated the greatest trust, which they have to bestow, to those faithful representatives who made their true voice heard against the disturbers and destroyers of Europe. They suffered, with unapproving acquiescence, solicitations to an unjust and

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usurping Power, whom they did not provoke, and whose hostile menaces they did not dread. When the exigencies of the publick service could only be met by their voluntary zeal, they started forth with an ardour, which outstripped the desires of those, who had injured them by doubting, whether it might not be necessary to have recourse to compulsion. They have, in all things, reposed an enduring, but not an unreflecting confidence. That confidence demands a full return. It fixes a responsibility on the Ministers entire and undivided. The people stand acquitted, if the war is not carried on in a manner suited to it's objects. If the publick safety suffers any detriment, they are to answer it, and they alone. It's armies, it's navies, are given to them without stint or restriction. It's treasures are poured out at their feet. It's constancy is ready to second all their efforts. They are not to fear a responsibility for acts of manly adventure. The responsibility which they are to dread, is, lest they should shew themselves unequal to the expectation of a brave people. The more doubtful may be the constitutional and œconomical questions, upon which they have received so marked a support, the more loudly they are called upon to support this great war, for the success of which their country is willing to supersede considerations of no slight importance. Where I speak of responsibility, I do not mean to exclude that species of it, which  
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the legal powers of the country have a right finally to exact from those who abuse a publick trust ; bnt high as this is, there is a responsibility which attaches on them, from which the whole legitimate power of the kingdom cannot absolve them ; there is a responsibility to conscience and to glory ; a responsibility to the existing world, and to that posterity, which men of their eminence cannot avoid for glory or for shame ; a responsibility to a tribunal, at which, not only Ministers, but Kings and Parliaments, but even Nations themselves, must one day answer.